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ISSUE 8

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

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EPISODE I
THE PHANTOM MENACE

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine Issue 20 (May 1999)

May 1999
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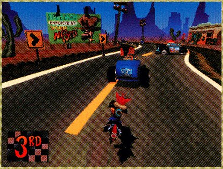

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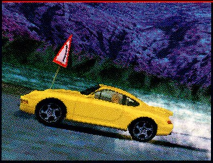

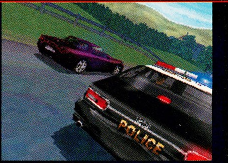

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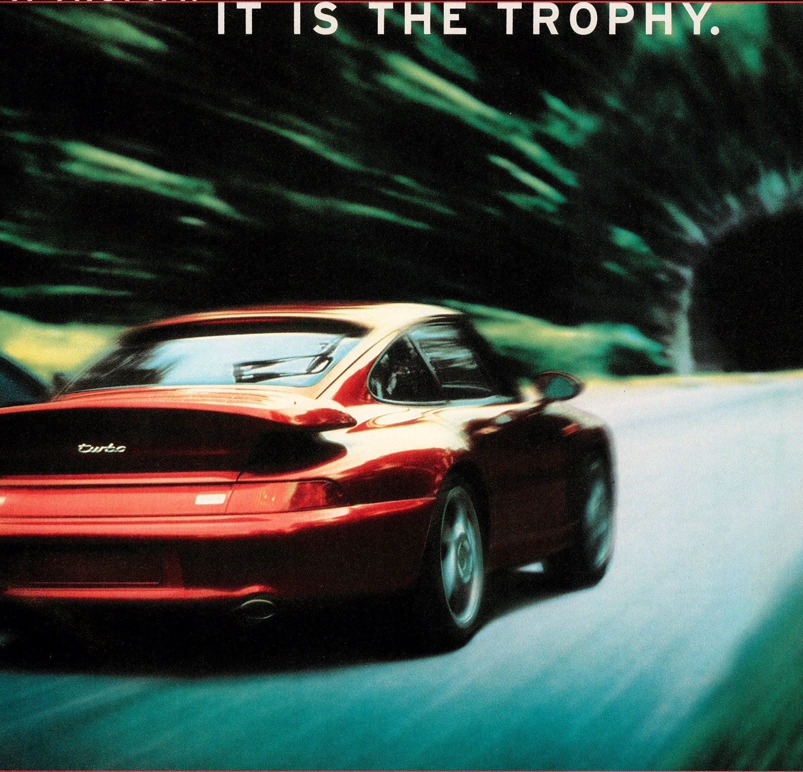

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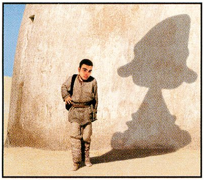
Editorial

A few unofficial words from the official editor-in-chief



He started out as a mild-mannered editor-in-chief, but he was destined for a dark future. Now we finally reveal the events that turned Kraig to the Dog Side.

One Huge News Item At A Time, Please

I just don't get it. Why do two of the biggest things that have happened to the PlayStation—the official announcement of the next PlayStation and the Star Wars: Episode I games—have to fall on the same darned issue? Now I have to pick which topic to ramble about, instead of being able to independently ramble on about each topic on different months. Such is one of the many decisions that we editors-in-chief must face on occasion. Feel our pain.

I was at Sony's little shindig unveiling in Japan in early March, and I must admit—I was floored. I've been covering the gaming business for six years (I got paid for it for only four of those, though), and I've never seen an event quite like it. I've seen systems get unveiled, launched, but never like this. Sony made it quite clear they weren't messing around at all.

Just about every new hardware demo I've been shown before was done in the back of someone's booth by appointment only. They usually show a few boring demonstrations geared toward highlighting the power of the new hardware, so you can get an idea in your head what the games might look like in the future. Well, with Sony's PlayStation 2 demo, picture 1,500 people from all over the world crowded around. Sony displayed those little technology demos, and then let the audience have a few minutes to surmise what they might mean in terms of gameplay. And then they showed the audience what those demos meant, by having playable Tekken 3 and Gran Turismo on the stage floor. It's something I'd never seen before, especially the first time a piece of hardware was announced—it was an amazing sight.

Apparently, just about everyone else agreed. Following the conference, practically everyone within earshot could be heard muttering about how much trouble Sega is really in. And indeed they are. The next PlayStation, whatever it might be called, is truly an amazing piece of hardware—something that just about everyone now knows, thanks to that well-orchestrated day. To the naysayers who think the hardware is too powerful to be priced right for the public, consider this: Years ago, when Sony released the PlayStation, pundits were amazed at the low price it launched at. Ever since then, Sony has been the leader in pricing when it comes to console hardware. With so much experience at making hardware affordable, do you really think the PlayStation 2 will debut at a less-than-affordable price? Of course not. And when it arrives in stores at the great price many think it won't and/or can't achieve, we'll all be in line waiting to buy a PlayStation. Again. I can't wait.

Kraig Kujawa
Editor-in-Chief

Mission Statement

The Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine is the only Sony Computer Entertainment America-licensed magazine and is published by ZD Inc. through an exclusive arrangement. As such, *OPM* remains independent from SCEA, and is a critical, autonomous voice that helps readers get more out of their PlayStation system by delivering the most current, comprehensive and candid coverage of PlayStation software and hardware.

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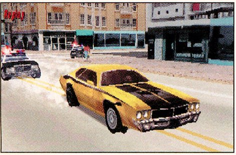
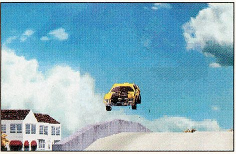


Red lights will be run.
Cop cruisers will be totaled.
And bank-robbing low-lifes will escape.

If you're any good.



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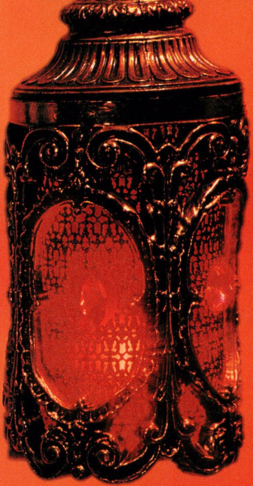

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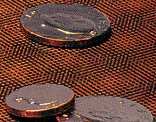

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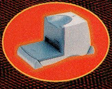

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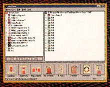

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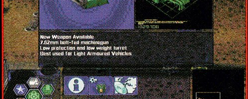

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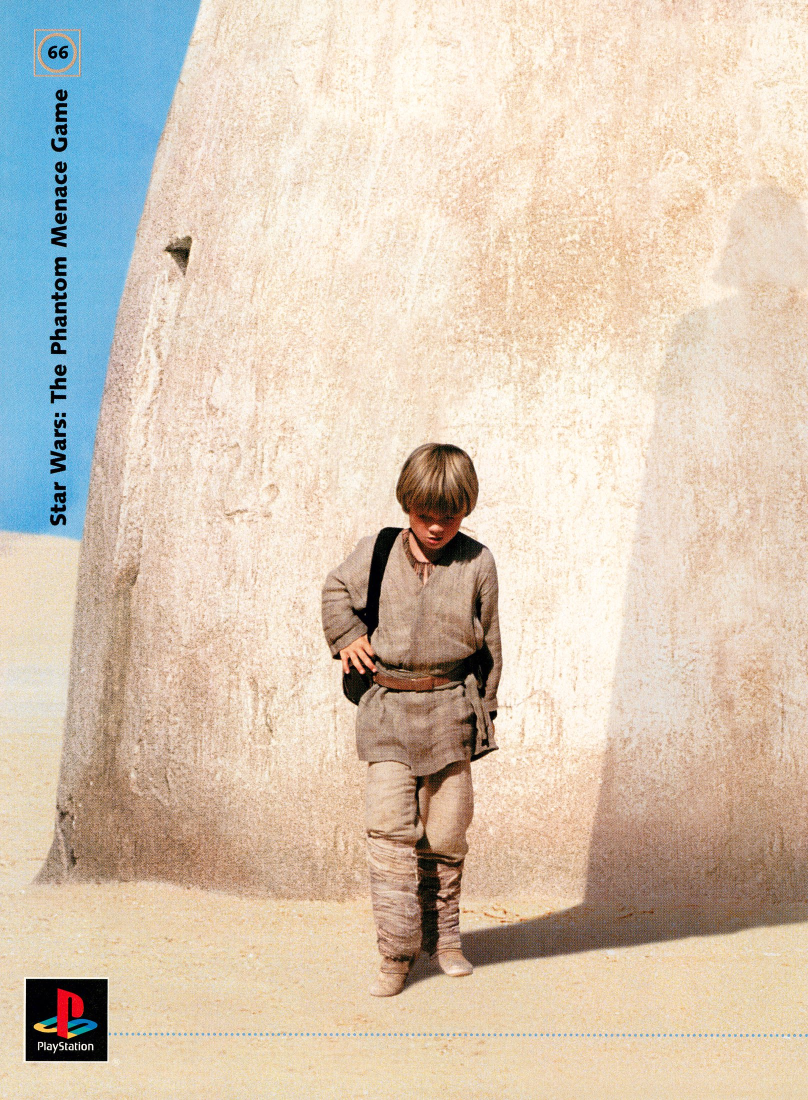

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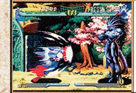

Not getting the most from Spider-Man's Web Ball attack? Check out this strategy to play better as Spidey and all the other characters in this fighting game.

100

Legend of Legaia

Legaia is a vast world that requires much exploring. Find all the game's secrets, including the hidden Ra-Seru powers and much more in this strategy.

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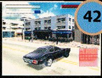

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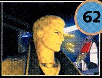

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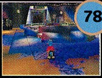

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g.e.a.r.

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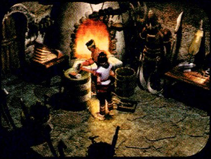

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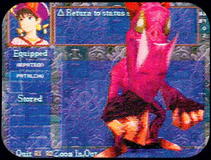

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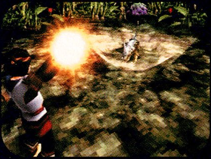

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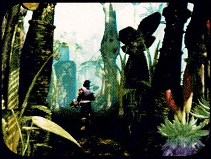

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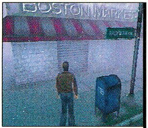
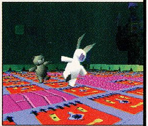
STORY OF THE TAMAMAYU

Caption Contest Winner



"Mmmm...a Demon Baby Carver sandwich sure would hit the spot right now."
Congrats to Jason Walstrom of Fort Worth, Texas!

Now you too can have your shot at history with the OPM Caption Contest! Every month, we run a game-related picture or screenshot. Your job is to write a humorous caption for it and submit it to us at any of the addresses on the following Letters page. The winner will be chosen by the following scientific method: We'll read them all, and the one that makes us laugh our asses off will get a sparkling new game or game-related item. Now, see what you can do with this pic:



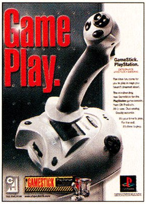
[You didn't really think those were the official rules, did you? For all the legal stuff on this and our other contests, please refer to page 77.]

Freudian Stick

Dear *OPM*,

Did you guys mistakenly print an ad that was meant for *Hustler* or *Playboy*? This ad I'm referring to is for the "GameStick." What a disgusting-looking accessory for a terrific system like the PlayStation. Did the inventor really think that a joystick that resembles a...well...you know...would be popular? Even my 8-year-old son said he wouldn't be caught dead with this thing in his hand. Thanks, but no thanks, I'll stick to the old-fashioned controller.

Karen Randle
Thunder Bay, Ontario



You know, our first response to this was, to paraphrase Freud, "Sometimes a joystick is just a joystick." But then we took a good look at the thing, and... well...geez. You've got a point there. Somehow we doubt it was intentional, though.

Letter of the Month

Dear OPM,

It's come to the point now that the Letters section is turning out even funnier than the magazine itself. I seriously flip to the first few pages just to crack myself up sometimes instead of delving into the video game world first. Why?

Take the whole gender issue thing mentioned in the February issue. Yes, maybe categorizing every girl as a non-video gamer might've been a bit harsh. However...it was funny! I got my kicks, and yes, I'm a girl—a girl who loves video games, but who can also take a joke. The fact that so many people took offense to that is—I'm sorry—hilarious! One of the reasons why this society, not to mention the video game genre specifically, seems so sexist is because PEOPLE LIKE TO MAKE A BIG DEAL OUT OF IT! That's my opinion anyway.

Another thing I just briefly want to touch on: The nudity issue with that loveable green gecko and the oh-so-famous pose...It's not that bad, people. It's really not.

Just a word of advice to the main reading audience out there: Sit back and think about the whys and possibly the humor of things before you go to your computer or get your pen and paper and write down every possible complaint you can think of (and no, I'm not complaining). Even though it's making the readers and the writers more aware of mistakes and offenses, it's stepping over the line between humor and seriousness.

Celene
sky-rose@att.net

We have to admit we're partly at fault for devoting so much space to these controversial issues; but hey, it's fun to discuss, and what other games magazine do you know of that throws open its Letters section to its readers' serious concerns? But what do you think, folks? Should we keep a tighter reign on "Big Issues" letters?

Do you think you have what it takes to write the Letter of the Month? Send us your timely, original, well-written video game expositions (you don't even have to agree with us!) and you too could win an official OPM Box of Joy. New surprise goodies every month!

Sound Advice

Dear *OPM*,

I want to warn all PlayStation owners of the dance craze they are housing. Thanks to the CD format, PlayStation owners can play actual songs from the game on a regular CD player, and even some that aren't in the game. Even our favorite magazine has silently put songs in their demo discs. (For instance, if you put in the demo disc with the Dead or Alive demo on it, you'll get the in-game music.) If you put the Spawn game in, you get songs and an interview with Todd McFarlane. Other discs that include music are Destruction Derby 1 and 2, all the Twisted Metals, Star Wars: Masters of Teräs Käsi and many others. You have to skip to the second song if there is one because the first track never has any sound. I urge everyone to try every disc they have.

Dennis Goring
dgoring@vaxxine.com

We'd just like to add a word of warning: It has been said that in very rare cases playing CD-ROM data tracks (which is what Track One is and why it never includes music; it houses all the game information) can damage your stereo, so we urge you to never play the first track on any data CD. These extra tracks show up in games using Redbook Audio; see our PlayStation Dictionary in the March '99 *OPM* for more info on these different sound formats. Oh, and speaking of which...

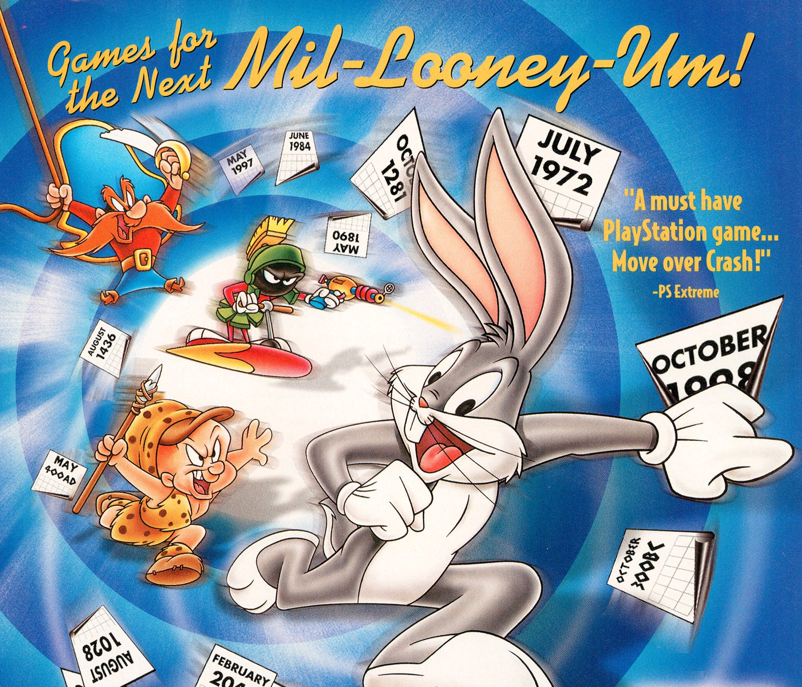
we want your input!

How do you like the mag? What about the design? Are we leaving anything out?

Let us know!

To get special attention as far as design and content issues go, label your letters or e-mails with the heading: PlayStation Magazine suggestions c/o the Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine at the addresses on the final Letters page.
We can't wait to hear from you.

Games for the Next Mil-Looney-Um!


MAY 1997
JUNE 1984
OCTOBER 1281
JULY 1972
MAY 1890
AUGUST 1436
MAY 400AD
OCTOBER 1998
OCTOBER 3000
AUGUST 1028
OCTOBER 1281
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JULY

"A must have PlayStation game... Move over Crash!"
-PS Extreme

Hop into the Time Machine with Bugs!

Bugs visits the Stone Age!

BUGS BUNNY LOST IN TIME

PlayStation
BUGS BUNNY LOST IN TIME
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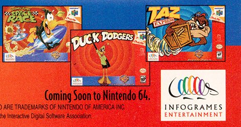
SPACE RACE
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TAZ EXPRESS

PlayStation

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gra•ti•tude

Dear *OPM*,

Thank you, thank you, thank you for the PlayStation Dictionary! I have had a PlayStation since November 1997 and I have subscribed to *OPM* for almost a year. I didn't understand some of the words you were using...until now! The "PlayStation Unabridged Dictionary" will be forever used!

Marc Abernathy
via the Internet

You're welcome.

OP^{2}M?

Dear *OPM*,

With all the new specs and info about the PlayStation 2 now surfacing, I've been wondering what's going to happen to my favorite PlayStation magazine when the PlayStation 2 finally hits U.S. shores. I know it's about a year and a half away, but that still leaves time for worry. Are you planning on changing the format of your magazine to the "Official U.S. PlayStation 2 Magazine" and following its games and news, and providing great demos of the games?

Scott Iburg
via the Internet

Naw, we decided we'll just hang it up come next year. :) OF COURSE we'll extend our coverage to the next PlayStation; we wouldn't miss it for the world! After all, we've kept you updated on all the PS2 info so far, right? And don't worry, we don't expect a name change, either.

Disc Krispies?

Dear *OPM*,

In my school we are writing to companies to request information about their products. I chose *OPM*. The product I would like to know about is Kellogg's Cereal. Can you please send me information on Kellogg's Cereal? Thank you.

name withheld
for obvious reasons

Honest, folks, we don't make these up.

Err...April Fools? Apparently, evil babies crawled into our Silent Hill strategy last month and cut off the end of a paragraph on page 101. It should've read, "...a platform that will take you to the Basement Boss." Mea culpa.

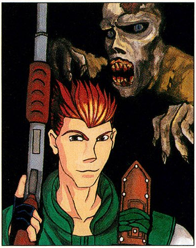
DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR SUBSCRIPTION TO *OPM*? POINT YOUR BROWSER TO http://subscribe.playstationmagazine.com/service AND FILL OUT THE APPROPRIATE FORM. WITH A CREDIT CARD, YOU CAN EVEN START A NEW SUBSCRIPTION!

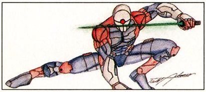
Did you buy a copy of our magazine that did not contain a demo CD? Simply send the receipt in an envelope marked "OPM Replacement Disc" to the address below with the name and address of the store plus your phone number and address and we'll send you the disc. Make sure you specify which month the corresponding disc belongs to in order to ensure you get the right one.

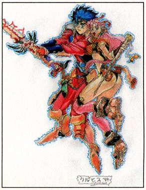
Also, if you have a malfunctioning or non-working demo disc, call SCEA at 1-800-345-SONY. They will provide instructions to obtain repair or replacement services. For more information see this month's Demo Disc section.

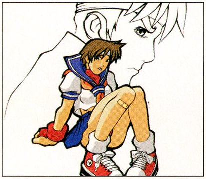
Yikes, More Reader Art!

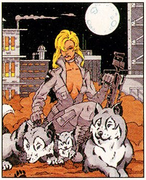
Every month we'll be picking one exceptional piece as our Reader Art of the Month. The creator of the winning work will have his/her piece published and will receive a new game (a *good* new game) in the mail—so include your mailing address with all submissions. Runners-up (as many as we want, 'cause it's our magazine) are printed as well. Good luck!

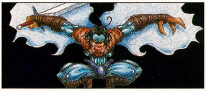












Check out this month's artists! Clockwise from above: this month's winner, Kara Hedge, Moravia, IA; Todd Adamson, Sandy, UT; Curtis Kent, San Leandro, CA; Steven Denten Zabel, Crest Hill, IL; Robert Sampson, El Cajon, CA; and at center, Christopher Dang, pandaman83@hotmail.com. Nice job, everyone!

3 ways to reach us

snail mail:

PlayStation Magazine
P.O. Box 3338
Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338

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"Shadow Madness has story-line inked to near perfection."
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An incredible, dark story that combines fantasy, science fiction and humor.

Impaler Attacks
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Normal
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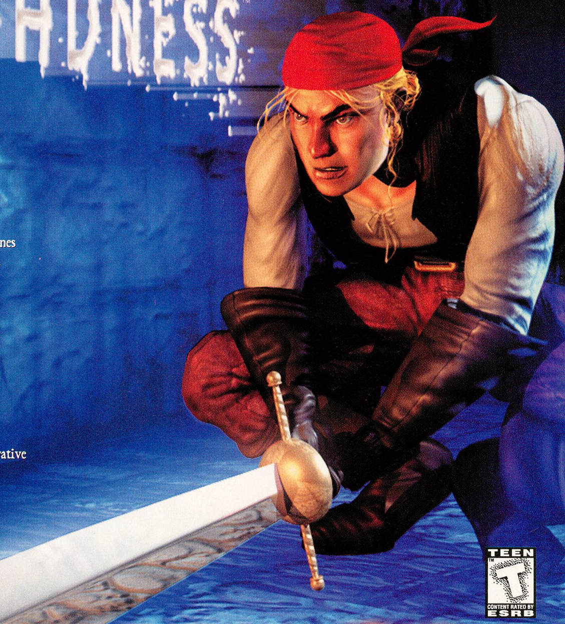
Intelligent run-time battles with innovative "twitch attack" and magic styles.

Over 40 hours of gameplay, exciting mini-games, fantastic FMV's and exciting characters.



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designed by the Italians.
No wonder it's attracted
to anything with curves.
namco
SOLVALOU
namco
EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
05...04...03...02...0

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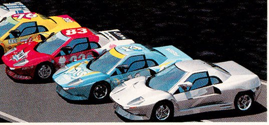

"R4 has to be the best-looking PlayStation racer ever (yes, edging out even Gran Turismo)."
- *Official PlayStation Magazine, December 1998*

"The first great racer of 1999 could be a ***Gran Turismo Killer***."
- *Official PlayStation Magazine, February 1999*

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RIDGE RACER TYPE 4
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EVERYONE
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It is speed incarnate. Its sexy sheet metal restrains a 3000 cc power plant that hits 0-190 mph in the snap of a linguini. It is the Bisonte - just one of the automotive marvels that scorch the streets in R4. With over 300 new cars, 45 fantastic models, 8 thrilling courses, a 2-player split-screen mode and only one way to drive. Fast. R4's asphalt gulping graphics and spectacular racing environments deliver racing speeds that were once deemed impossible. But not anymore. Now you've got R4. Ciao, baby.

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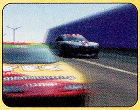
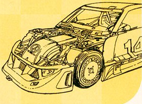
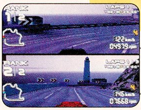
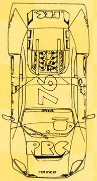
- Sensational graphics and lighting effects give every race a cinematic feel
- Race at all times of day and night, even during dramatic sunsets
- Relive your greatest moments through the dynamic-camera replay mode.
- Watch your race with all-new motion-blur effects

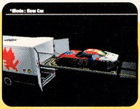




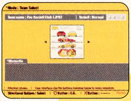


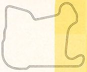
- Battle head-to-head in split-screen vs. mode



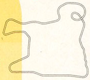


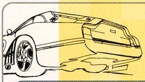
- Speed-tuned physics keep the arcade-style action fast-paced
- Championship performances unlock secret hidden supercars
- Don't be afraid to bump the other car, it's all part of a winning strategy
- Join one of four international race teams - each with individual strengths and weaknesses
- Design original logos to customize your car

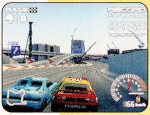




- Race on gorgeous cityscape, countryside and racetrack courses







- Money can't buy victory. You've got to earn new cars with your race performance
- Experience all the ups and downs of a full racing season in the Grand Prix mode
- Includes a Ridge Racer Turbo Mode bonus disc with 8 60 FPS tracks

PlayStation®

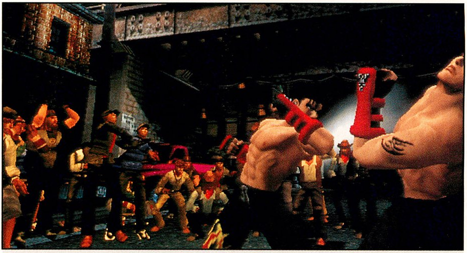
PlayStation 2 Officiall

Sony Takes the Wraps Off Their Monster System

PlayStation has become more than a traditional console game system. It's captured the hearts and minds of millions of gamers, both hardcore and casual, and provided hours upon hours of electronic entertainment these past three (four, if you start from the Japanese launch) years. It's made the suits at Sony sit up and take notice ever since it became their most popular product in company history. But technology is always evolving, and what was hot five years ago is eclipsed by bigger, better and flashier graphics hardware.

That's where PlayStation 2 comes in.

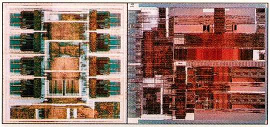
On March 2 at an invite-only event in Tokyo, 1,500 attendees, including publishers, developers and the media, witnessed Sony pulling back the curtain on its next big thing—the next generation of PlayStation hardware. While Sony is reluctant to call it "PlayStation 2," for the sake of clarity we'll refer to it that way in this story. An official name for the machine and its appearance will be revealed later this summer. But don't get ready to sell off all your other games and systems just yet. PlayStation 2 won't be out for a while—Sony plans a release this winter in Japan (sometime before March 2000) and a U.S. and European launch in the fall of 2000.



This fully playable Tekken 3 game demo featured hundreds of fully polygonal onlookers cheering on the fight. The graphics were absolutely amazing, and Namco even apologized that they didn't have time to do a crowd of thousands, like they originally planned to.

Gettin' All Emotional

At the heart of Sony's next-generation system is the Emotion Engine, a 128-bit CPU co-developed by Toshiba and Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. (SCEI). The chip's floating point capabilities are multiple times beyond the latest PC technology, and it incorporates MPEG2 decoding (the compression standard for DVD) and high-performance DMA controllers on one chip. Using Direct Rambus DRAM in two channels allows the system to move data at high speeds, achieving a 3.2 GB/second bus bandwidth, four times the output of PCs built using PC-100 architecture.



Here's a peek at the Emotion Engine (left) and Graphic Synthesizer (right). They're relatively big and fancy-looking. When they debut in the PlayStation 2 depends on how quickly Sony can make enough of them.

Graphics Synthesizer

Working in tandem with the Emotion Engine is the Graphics Synthesizer, optimized to display the kinds of CG effects that previously could be turned out only by supercomputers. With a 2,560-bit-wide data bus, the Graphics Synthesizer can keep up with the data flow from the Emotion Engine, giving it a peak drawing capacity of 75 million polygons per second. In addition, the GS can render 150 million particles a second, which help to create effects like fog, smoke and haze.

As more effects are added to the mix, the number of polygons that can be turned out does get lower. With Z-buffering, textures, lighting and alpha-blending (transparency) turned on, that number falls to 20 million polygons a second. The GS takes care of each render pass, adding effects without the need for an additional push from the main CPU or bus.

The Emotion Engine and Graphics Synthesizer add up to what's called "Emotion Synthesis." SCEI executive vice president Ken Kutaragi's of vision for the new machine is to create in-game graphics that are very close to real life. "Our dream is to create a new form of computer-based entertainment," he said. Demos displayed at the conference showed that creating ultra-realistic rendered graphics is not as unbelievable as once thought (more about the demos later).

To bring both the Emotion Engine and Graphics Synthesizer to market, Sony and Toshiba have joined forces, creating two new chip plants. One will be majority owned by Toshiba and will produce the Emotion Engine using new production lines and existing Toshiba clean-room facilities. The other will be wholly owned by SCEI to produce the Graphics Synthesizer. These new

Lives!

Official PlayStation 2 Stat Sheet

CPU:
128 Bit "Emotion Engine"
System Clock Frequency: 300 MHz
Cache Memory Instruction: 16KB, Data: 8KB + 16KB (ScrP)
Main Memory Direct Rambus (Direct RDRAM) Memory Size: 32MB
Memory Bus Bandwidth: 3.2GB per Second
Co-processor FPU (Floating Point Unit)
Floating Point Multiply Accumulator x 1,
Floating Point Divider x 1
Vector Units VU0 and VU1
Floating Point Multiply Accumulator x 9,
Floating Point Divider x 3
Floating Point Performance: 6.2 GFLOPS
3D CG Geometric Transformation: 66 Million Polygons/second
Compressed Image Decoder MPEG2

Graphics:
"Graphics Synthesizer"
Clock Frequency: 150MHz
DRAM Bus bandwidth: 48GB per Second
DRAM Bus width: 2560bits
Pixel Configuration: RGB:Alpha:Z Buffer (24:8:32)
Maximum Polygon Rate: 75 Million Polygons per Second

Sound:
"SPU2+CPU"
Number of Voices ADPCM: 48 channels on SPU2, plus definable, software programmable voices
Sampling Frequency: 44.1 KHz or 48 KHz (selectable)

IOP:
I/O Processor
CPU: Core PlayStation (current) CPU
Clock Frequency: 33.8MHz or 37.5MHz (Selectable)
Sub Bus: 32 Bit
Interface Types: IEEE1394, Universal Serial Bus (USB), communication via PC-Card (PCMCIA)

Disc Device:
CD-ROM and DVD-ROM

production facilities will help to keep the cost of the machine down. While a final price hasn't been announced yet, it will definitely be under $500, and most educated guesses put the price around $299.

Backward Compatibility

You might be thinking that with all this processing power, you'll have to sell your old system and games to buy all new controllers, new games, etc. But wait—you won't have to do (as much of) that with Sony's new machine, as it's backward compatible with the original PlayStation games and accessories, including peripherals like the Dual Shock, PocketStation and memory cards. PlayStation 2 won't enhance the graphics in the old games, but you will be able to play 100 percent of your current PlayStation game library on the new system. So, in other words, all your *Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine* demo discs will still be playable. Sony doesn't plan to create games that branch off—that is, are compatible with the standard PlayStation model but will play with enhanced effects when used on PlayStation 2.

Crash 3 provided the proof of the PlayStation 2's backward compatibility.

Backward compatibility is achieved by using the system's I/O Processor, developed with LSI Logic. The entire PlayStation CPU is located on that chip, with enhanced cache memory and a high-performance DMA architecture that gives it a bit of a speed boost with loading times.

Truly Digital

Sony has created a platform that incorporates not only the latest in computer graphics technology, but also select digital standards that will help PlayStation 2 climb above the next generation from the start. Of those standards, the most important inclusion is DVD. A single DVD-ROM disc can hold 4.7 GB of data, giving developers a lot bigger canvas to work with. Not only that, but with the Emotion Engine's ability to decode MPEG2 video, games can have high-quality video during gameplay or in cinemas. Initially, it's expected that developers will create games using the tried-and-true CD-ROM format, eventually moving up to DVD as titles begin to require the amount of space the format can provide. Sony hasn't decided whether or not PlayStation 2 will be able to play DVD movies—so don't throw away your DVD player just yet.

Using DVD opens up digital audio, and Sony has made sure your ears will hear the difference (if you've got the equipment). The machine will output Dolby Digital AC-3 and Digital Theater Systems (DTS), giving developers the ability to create audio that surrounds the player.

Sony's I/O Processor also has incorporated new PC technology to give it expandability for the future. It will feature the use of IEEE 1394, known as FireWire because of its speed, and Universal Serial Bus (USB) technology. Both of these give PlayStation 2 the ability to connect to any digital device imaginable, like a digital camera, VCR, printer, keyboard, mouse, etc. SCEI's Terry Tokunaka explained that the use of FireWire and USB will change the way users look at games, too. "Maybe you could take your own pictures through a digital camcorder through the IEEE 1394 port and modify characters in games so that you can be the hero." Now instead of imagining that you are Solid Snake in Metal Gear Solid, you could actually be him.

The system also uses PCMCIA, the PC standard for card-based modems and peripherals. Sony does have plans to include modem connectivity, although it's not known whether Sony will set up an online service to go with the system. Kutaragi commented that "online gaming is very attractive—but the infrastructure of the Internet is not satisfactory at the moment. It is very easy for us to give the system communication capabilities through the USB and PCMCIA

Square's Final Fantasy demo was a jaw-dropper. At first, this scene looked like full-motion video, until they stopped the scene then moved the camera around, proving it was 3D rendered. They then dropped new characters into the scene and added special screen effects.

interfaces, but it will all be down to the application of the software in the end."

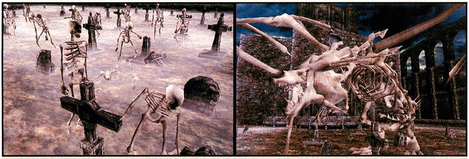
As Digital TV and HDTV become more accepted as visual formats, the new PlayStation will be able to adapt, including support for Digital TV and VESA display formats, and including NTSC and PAL display compatibility. It will be a few years before these new TV standards begin making their way into consumers' homes, but when that happens, PlayStation 2 will be ready.

Showing Off the Power

As part of the presentation, Sony built a wide array of technical demos, showing off the system's graphic capabilities. Each was created by top developers—Square, Namco, Polyphony Digital and From Software—and ranged from simple shapes created on screen to realistic effects and even, yes, game demos that were playable.

The End?

Is this the end of the PlayStation? No. Sony is adamant that it will continue supporting the original PlayStation as long as it makes sense to do so. New games are being developed now and will continue to be even after the next system is launched. The company also said it will not launch the system until there are enough games to support it, currently estimated at eight titles.



From Software's graveyard demo featured a fairy that would destroy these skeletons (left), which would then reassemble to create a huge beast (right). The future of boss creatures?

Release Games

Ken Kutaragi stated that the hardware would not be launched in Japan until the games were ready, so here's our guess about what those Japanese release games might be. Don't you just love speculation? We sure do.

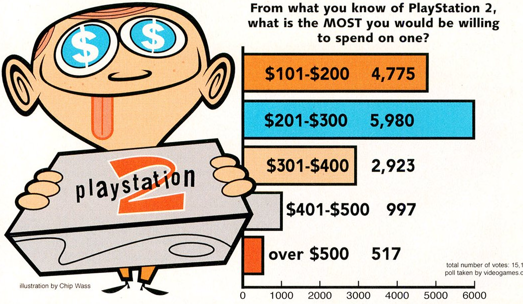
Gran Turismo 3 – This is the sort of game that can easily launch a system.

Tekken 4 – Namco already had Tekken 3 up and running to show things they would like to implement in the next addition to the series.

Ridge Racer – It launched with the PS. Why not do it again?

A Question of Control

One of the remaining questions regarding the new system is how many controller ports will be built in. When asked, Kutaragi replied coyly, "How many do you want?" It seems like a no-brainer that the PS2 will have four, but it probably won't be officially confirmed until the physical hardware is shown sometime this summer.

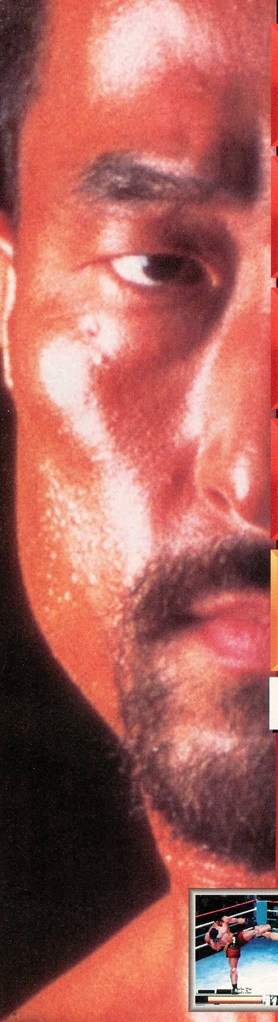


From what you know of PlayStation 2, what is the MOST you would be willing to spend on one?

total number of votes: 15,1
poll taken by videogames.c

illustration by Chip Wass

There were various demos demonstrating different capabilities (transparencies, physics, reflective surfaces, etc.) of the PlayStation 2. They were just the appetizers to the main course, which were the amazing game demos shown afterward.



KARATE
KENPO
KICKBOXING
KUNG-FU

K-1 REVENGE

K-1 REVENGE *combines all forms of* **MARTIAL ARTS** *in a raucus type of fighting simulation that combines the special moves and combos of the best fighting games with the gritty realism only possible when the action is based on the true life capabilities of* **ACTUAL K-1 FIGHTERS.**

The "K" of K-1 refers to the main disciplines that are represented in K-1: Karate, Kickboxing, Kung-Fu & Kenpo. The "1" represents the fact that this is an open weight-class fighting sport and also the champion is truly #1, the best.

EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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PlayStation®

NOW YOUR FAVORITE
FINAL FANTASY® VII CHARACTERS
ARE FIGHTING FOR THEIR LIVES

AGAIN

GOD BLESS THE RING
EHRGEIZ™

MAY 1999

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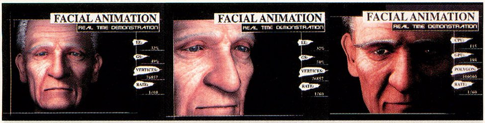
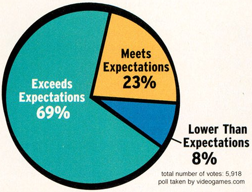


Though these pictures don't quite capture the complexity apparent in Square's demonstration, this facial animation demo put a face to the Emotion Engine's immense capabilities.

How does what you have seen and heard so far of the PlayStation 2 meet with your expectations?



total number of votes: 5,918
poll taken by videogames.com

PS2 Developers

Inevitably, just about all (and maybe even more) of the PlayStation developers will end up developing for the next PlayStation—it's just a matter of when they'll make it official. Below is a list of the companies that have already publically made their intentions blatantly obvious.

Namco – Long time Sony ally, and major contributor to PlayStation 2 Demonstration.

Square – Strong ties with Sony. It was even mentioned in Q&A session that the companies would on occasion discuss the new platform over drinks. Major contributor to PS2 Demonstration.

From Software – Showed skeletal demo at event.

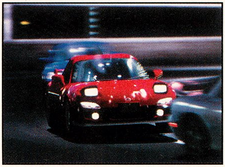
Polyphony Digital – A playable Gran Turismo was up and running—what more proof do you need?

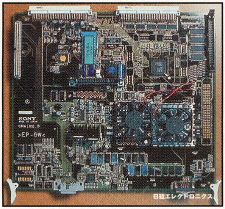
Infogrames – After PS2 demo, the CEO of Infogrames announced his company's intention to develop for PS2.

Rockstar Games – They want to bring over a Duke Nukem game to the next PlayStation.

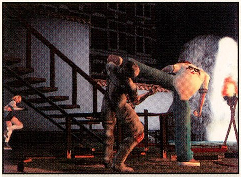
Electronic Arts – Right before the event, EA was publically making a point of singing the praises of PS2. They should. The success of the PlayStation has helped EA become the power they are today.

Ubi Soft – Ubi Soft has always been quick to jump on new hardware, and they've made PlayStation 2 noises already.





The two chips hidden under fans are the Emotion Engine and the Graphics Synthesizer (the Emotion Engine is on the left and the Graphics Synthesizer is on the right). Immediately to the top of the duo is a smaller processor bearing the LSI logo—we assume this is the I/O chip that will give the PlayStation 2 its ability to play current PlayStation titles.



In addition to the Tekken demo, Namco showed a fighting-game demo with four fighters duking it out in a huge two-story room. They threw each other off ledges and into objects, in addition to knocking the hell out of each other.

10 things we think we think this month

1 The Phantom Menace will break Titanic's record for highest-grossing film ever. In the first weekend.

2 Backward compatibility is a good idea.

3 Colored Dual Shock controllers are cuter than colored iMacs. Cheaper, too.

4 It's a good time to be a PlayStation fan.

5 The only place boxers can ever be guaranteed a fair fight is on the PlayStation. Except for the one Don King owns.

6 The Emotion Engine will break new ground in video games. It will make those Japanese girlfriend simulators more realistic than ever.

7 Mr. Domino should be in those upcoming Star Wars movies.

8 Fox Interactive announced a sequel to Die Hard Trilogy. Gamers just can't get enough of that "Yippee-Ki-Yay, M*f*er" line.

9 Jeff Gordon Racing was recently delayed. It's the first time he hasn't crossed the finish line on time.

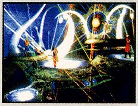
10 Sega's screwed. We're pretty sure about this one.

News Bits

Cast Your Vote

THE FACTS: Tecmo is polling gamers over the Internet to find out whether or not there's interest in a new Ninja Gaiden game. If all goes well, we might actually see Ryu Hayabusa in his natural habitat, fighting the scum of the earth (and not just in Tecmo's fighting game Dead or Alive). Want to voice your support? Send e-mail to tecmoinc@earthlink.net and tell them you want to see a new Ninja Gaiden game!

THE RUB: Does the question even really need to be asked? Of course we would buy a new Ninja Gaiden game. It never left the confines of the original 8-bit Nintendo, and you've got to wonder what the possibilities would be for a new title using the PlayStation's power.



Big Sales, Little Glitch

THE FACTS: Square's Final Fantasy VIII had an amazing opening day in Japan, raking in sales of 2.21 million copies between its own DigiCube distribution service (1.65 million) and other retailers (560,000). Opening day sales are estimated at 17.2 billion yen (about $145 million). Sales of the game have now reportedly topped 3 million.

THE RUB: Unfortunately, Final Fantasy VIII has been scarred by reports of a software glitch in the game that messes with your game saves (ouch!). Square says that a little more than 1,000 cases of the problem have been reported—minuscule compared with the game's overall sales. Final Fantasy VIII will be released in the U.S. later this year, bug-free.

Duke Debut on PS2?

THE FACTS: Rockstar Games and the Gathering of Developers have announced a co-publishing agreement that will bring Duke Nukem to a next-generation console. Scheduled for a release in 2000, the yet-unnamed game will star everyone's favorite gun-totin' wiseguy in a third-person perspective game.

THE RUB: While the two companies won't say which next-generation system the new Duke will be released on, we've been hearing that PlayStation 2 is the frontrunner, as the company said it would be for a soon-identified platform (and right after that, PlayStation 2 was announced). Question is, do we need another Duke game?

Color Controllers

THE FACTS: They've been available in Japan for more than a year, but finally, Sony's multi-colored versions of the Dual Shock controller are making their way to the U.S. The controllers will come in various colors, including clear, black, green and blue. The pads will retail for about $30 and should be available by the time you read this.

THE RUB: It's taken a while, but finally these colored Dual Shocks are coming out. While there's nothing different about them from the standard Dual Shock that's been available for a year, the new colors do provide a new incentive for people to buy additional pads.

7th
2/4
210mph
4985rpm 4th

False Start

THE FACTS: Jeff Gordon's PlayStation debut is being held at the starting line for the time being. ASC Games has pushed back the PS release of Jeff Gordon XS Racing to the fall, saying that it will add additional platforms to the lineup, which may include a PlayStation 2 release later on. The PC version will be out in May.

THE RUB: Jeff Gordon's a legend in NASCAR. Whenever this game does get the go-ahead, there will definitely be people poised to buy it—but hopefully they're doing some final tweaks on the game during the delay.

Top 10

Japan's Top 10-Selling PlayStation Games

March sales rankings courtesy of *The PlayStation Magazine Weekly*, SOFTBANK:

1. **Final Fantasy VIII** Square – RPG
2. **Option Tuning Car Battle** Jaleco – Racing
3. **Space Battleship Yamato** Bandai – RPG
4. **Beatmania** Konami – Misc.
5. **Simple 1500 Series volume 1** Culture Publishers – Misc.
6. **Bass Landing** Ascii – Sports
7. **Armored Core: Master of Arena** From Software – Action
8. **Beatmania Append 3rd Mix** Konami – Misc.
9. **Crash Bandicoot 3** Sony CEI – Action
10. **Tales of Phantasia** Namco – RPG

U.K.'s Top 10-Selling PlayStation Games

February sales rankings courtesy of *ChartTrack*:

1. **A Bug's Life** Disney/Sony – Action
2. **Premier Manager** Gremlin – Sports
3. **WCW/nWo: Thunder** THQ – Action
4. **FIFA '99** EA – Sports
5. **Crash Bandicoot 3** Sony – Action
6. **Cool Boarders** Sony – Sports
7. **Tomb Raider 3** Eidos – Action
8. **Spyro the Dragon** Sony – Action
9. **Brian Lara Cricket** Codemasters – Sports
10. **Abe's Exoddus** GT – Adventure

Would you be interested in seeing Star Wars Episode I games come to the PlayStation?

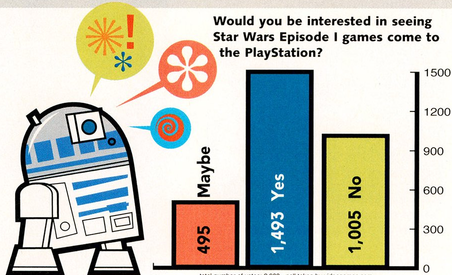
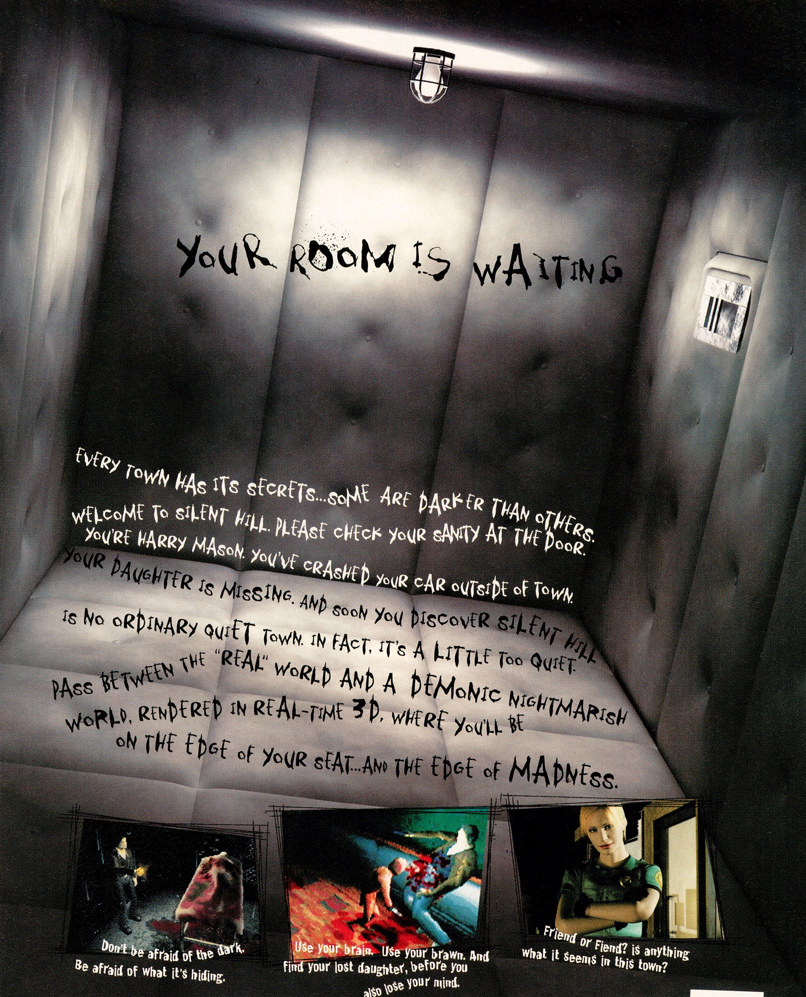


illustration by Chip Wass

total number of votes: 2,993 poll taken by videogames.com

Virtual GameStation Presses On Despite Sony Protests

Sony filed three requests on March 11, 1999, with the San Francisco Federal District Court regarding Connectix's PlayStation emulator, Virtual GameStation, all of which were rejected. Those requests demanded that Connectix cease use of all copies of PlayStation BIOS, deliver all BIOS copies to Sony counsel, and give Sony all prototypes for the Windows version of the software. The court has ordered Connectix to halt development on the Windows version of the software for 20 days, when another court hearing can be held.



EVERY TOWN HAS ITS SECRETS...SOME ARE DARKER THAN OTHERS. WELCOME TO SILENT HILL. PLEASE CHECK YOUR SANITY AT THE DOOR. YOU'RE HARRY MASON. YOU'VE CRASHED YOUR CAR OUTSIDE OF TOWN. YOUR DAUGHTER IS MISSING. AND SOON YOU DISCOVER SILENT HILL IS NO ORDINARY QUIET TOWN. IN FACT, IT'S A LITTLE TOO QUIET. PASS BETWEEN THE "REAL" WORLD AND A DEMONIC NIGHTMARISH WORLD, RENDERED IN REAL-TIME 3D, WHERE YOU'LL BE ON THE EDGE OF YOUR SEAT...AND THE EDGE OF MADNESS.

Don't be afraid of the dark. Be afraid of what it's hiding.

Use your brain. Use your brawn. And find your lost daughter, before you also lose your mind.

Friend or Fiend? is anything what it seems in this town?

PlayStation

MATURE
M
AGES 17+

SILENT HILL™

KONAMI

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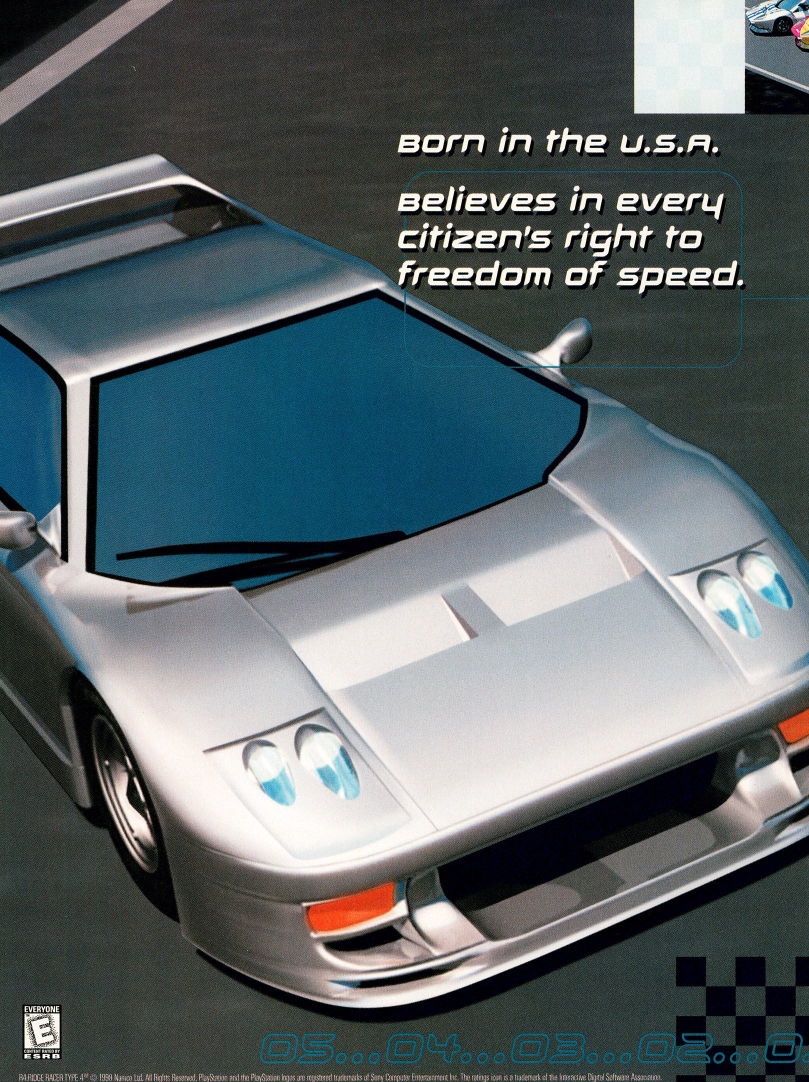
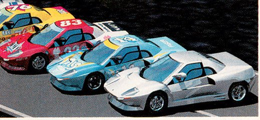

Born in the U.S.A.
Believes in every citizen's right to freedom of speed.
EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB
05...04...03...02...0

R4:RIDGE RACER TYPE 4™ © 1998 Namco Ltd. All Rights Reserved. PlayStation and the PlayStation logos are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.



"R4 has to be the best-looking PlayStation racer ever (yes, edging out even Gran Turismo)."
- Official PlayStation Magazine, December 1998

"The first great racer of 1999 could be a ***Gran Turismo Killer***."
- Official PlayStation Magazine, February 1999

PlayStation
R4
RIDGE RACER TYPE 4
EVERYONE
E
namco

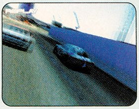
It boasts an American stock car pedigree. Built Tallahassee tough and water-moccasin fast. Its muscle-bound V8 unleashes 317 stampeding horses, as well as unlimited "Yee-Haa's!". It is the Detector - just one of the automotive marvels that torches the streets in R4. With over 300 new cars, 45 fantasy models, 8 thrilling courses, a 2-player split-screen mode and only one way to drive. Fast. R4's asphalt gulping graphics and spectacular racing environments deliver racing speeds that were once deemed impossible. But not anymore. Now you've got R4. So long, pardner.

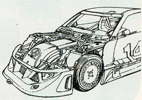
R4
RIDGE RACER TYPE 4

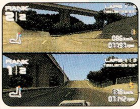
Think fast. Drive faster.

namco
www.namco.com

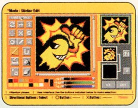
- Sensational graphics and lighting effects give every race a cinematic feel
- Race at all times of day and night, even during dramatic sunsets
- Relive your greatest moments through the dynamic-camera replay mode
- Watch your race with all-new motion-blur effects

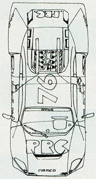




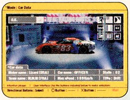


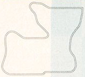
- Battle head-to-head in split-screen vs. mode



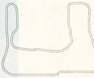


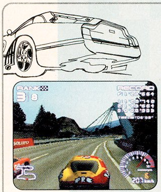
- Speed-tuned physics keep the arcade-style action fast-paced
- Championship performances unlock secret hidden supercars
- Don't be afraid to bump the other car, it's all part of a winning strategy
- Join one of four international race teams - each with individual strengths and weaknesses
- Design original logos to customize your car





- Race on gorgeous cityscape, countryside and racetrack courses





- Money can't buy victory. You've got to earn new cars with your race performance
- Experience all the ups and downs of a full racing season in the Grand Prix mode
- Includes a Ridge Racer Turbo Mode bonus disc with 8 60 FPS tracks

PlayStation ®

Top 20

The best-selling U.S. PlayStation titles as reported by the nation's top retailers

1 **WCW/nWo Thunder** ●○○○○
Publisher: THQ **Last Month:** 1 **Genre:** Action **Release Date:** Jan. 1999
The masses have spoken. Thunder tops the charts for the second month in a row, proving that melodrama staring beefy men really is good entertainment.

2 **Frogger** ●●◐○○
Publisher: Hasbro **Last Month:** 3 **Genre:** Action **Release Date:** Oct. 1997
Hop, hop, hop...Frogger just won't stop on its way to the top. This retro title is winning over yet another generation of gamers.

3 **Gran Turismo** ●●●●●
Publisher: SCEA **Last Month:** 4 **Genre:** Racing **Release Date:** May 1998
We're all drooling over the pics of Gran Turismo 2 in this month's issue, but until that game comes out, this one's still the best realistic racer out there.

4 **Metal Gear Solid** ●●●●●
Publisher: Konami **Last Month:** 2 **Genre:** Adventure **Release Date:** Oct. 1998
The only time this game should fall out of the top 20 is when every PlayStation owner out there has a copy of this masterpiece.

5 **Rugrats: Search for Reptar** ●●●◐○
Publisher: THQ **Last Month:** – **Genre:** Action **Release Date:** Dec. 1998
More evidence of the PlayStation's broad audience: The ultimate kid game stakes out a spot in the top five best sellers.

6	**Crash Bandicoot 2**	●●●●○	Publisher: SCEA	Last Month: 8	Release Date: Oct. 1997
7	**Crash Bandicoot: WARPED**	●●●●●	Publisher: SCEA	Last Month: 5	Release Date: Oct. 1998
8	**WCW Nitro**	●●◐○○	Publisher: THQ	Last Month: –	Release Date: Nov. 1997
9	**Spyro the Dragon**	●●●●○	Publisher: SCEA	Last Month: 7	Release Date: Sept. 1998
10	**NBA Live 99**	●●●●○	Publisher: EA	Last Month: –	Release Date: Oct. 1998
11	**Namco Museum Vol. 3**	●●●◐○	Publisher: Namco	Last Month: –	Release Date: Feb. 1997
12	**Contender**	●●●●○	Publisher: SCEA	Last Month: –	Release Date: Jan. 1999
13	**A Bug's Life**	●●○○○	Publisher: SCEA	Last Month: 9	Release Date: Dec. 1998
14	**Namco Museum Vol. 1**	●●●◐○	Publisher: Namco	Last Month: –	Release Date: Aug. 1996
15	**Cool Boarders 2**	●●●●○	Publisher: SCEA	Last Month: 11	Release Date: Nov. 1997
16	**Knockout Kings**	●●●◐○	Publisher: EA	Last Month: 6	Release Date: Oct. 1998
17	**Tomb Raider**	●●●●○	Publisher: Eidos	Last Month: 12	Release Date: Nov. 1996
18	**Cool Boarders 3**	●●●○○	Publisher: 989 Studios	Last Month: 10	Release Date: Oct. 1998
19	**Twisted Metal 2**	●●●●○	Publisher: SCEA	Last Month: –	Release Date: Nov. 1996
20	**Tetris Plus**	●●●◐○	Publisher: Jaleco	Last Month: –	Release Date: Oct. 1996

namco Presents

Top 10 Most Wanted

As compiled by our attractive, intelligent readers

1. **Metal Gear Solid** Just imagine what the sequel to this game would look like on the PlayStation 2...
2. **Silent Hill** This genuinely disturbing game combines psychological terror with a satisfying dose of gore.
3. **Syphon Filter** Sniper shots, great enemy AI, tough-to-beat missions and more make this a worthy game.
4. **Crash Bandicoot: WARPED** Crash continues to crush the competition in the platform genre.
5. **Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver** Some of you would probably sell your souls to play this game.
6. **Need For Speed: High Stakes** Another opportunity to sharpen your skills at evading The Man while on the road.
7. **Tomb Raider III** Lara can still steal the hearts of many a gamer, even though this isn't her best outing.
8. **R4: Ridge Racer Type 4** Namco's incredible racer has many a heart racing in anticipation.
9. **WCW/nWo Thunder** It's ironic that the competition in this game is more real than its real-life counterpart.
10. **Ehrgeiz** A true 3D fighter with loads of great characters, including some fella named Cloud.

Coral Greene's Top 5

Our monthly contest winner's top five picks

1. **Tomb Raider III** Hey, Coral—you want that top-secret nude code? Heh, heh...just kidding!
2. **Jeopardy!** You'll need more than quick thumbs to beat your buddies at this brain-buster.
3. **Metal Gear Solid** This instant classic is so good that it basically created a whole new genre of games.
4. **MediEvil** Sir Dan has got to be one of the coolest "lesser" mascots out there.
5. **Gran Turismo** Nothing's more satisfying than completing a perfect race, then watching your own replay.

Editors' Top 5

What we've been playing instead of working

1. **PlayStation 2 movies** We can't stop gawking at those videos showing Sony's supersystem in action.
2. ***Phantom Menace* trailers** A week before deadline, the second trailer was released. Simply incredible.
3. **Driver** Sure, the graphics aren't the sharpest, but so far the gameplay more than makes up for it.
4. **Final Fantasy VIII** Who can wait for the translation when we've got a Japanese copy here already?
5. **Triple Play 2000** How can you resist a baseball game where you can make a 5-foot, 300-pound shortstop?

Send your votes for the Readers' 10 Most Wanted games to: *Official PlayStation Magazine* Attn: Readers' 10 Most Wanted, P.O. Box 3338, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338 or e-mail us at: dan_peluso@zd.com or visit the *OPM* section on www.videogames.com

Source: NPD TRSTS Video Games, February 1999 (weeks one and two). Call them at (516) 625-2345 for questions about this list. Note: No games for competing console systems (e.g., N64, Sega Saturn, etc.) were included. Overall sales figures may vary. Game descriptions are written by the *OPM* staff.

It's anyone who starts a sentence,
"When I was your age..."
It's your parents when they say,
"Why couldn't you be more like your brother?"
It's the cop who gave you the jaywalking ticket.
It's all the girls who ever
gave you a fake phone number.
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Show them how you really feel.

Wreak havoc in 40 different missions, in four unique, upgradable ships, using 13 different weapons against 30+ enemy craft. Experience wormholes, asteroids, cloaked planets, and kamikaze drones. Even play against that person you're ticked off at, head-to-head.

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If this were Los Angeles, it would be considered a Stage 8,000 Smog Alert.

Lee
Bubble Crash
<Thunder> Viguro Lv2
Summer
Lip King
EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

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www.playstation.com

Legend of LEGAIA™

A deadly mist grips the land. In its wake lies a decomposing herd of corpses. In its path are the last remaining outposts of civilization. To save them, you must fend off an army of mad beasts, a giant monster and a mysterious wizard who will stop at nothing short of total annihilation. The secret that you will discover lies in the Genesis trees. Can you find and save all the trees? Or will you be taking one last breath before the long dirt nap?

PlayStation®

Coming Soon

Compiled by Dan Peluso with extensive verification by Johnny Masthead

Clockwise from top left: Xena Warrior Princess, WipeOut 3, Knights of Carnage, Dino Crisis and Le Mans 24 Hour.

May

Bloody Roar 2	Sony CEA	Fighting
Broken Sword: The Smoking Mirror	THQ	Adventure
Ehrgeiz	Square	Fighting
Evil Zone	Titus	Fighting
G Police Weapons of Justice	Psygnosis	Action
Gauntlet Legends	Midway	Action
Gungage	Konami	Action
Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver	Eidos	Adventure
Looney Tunes: Lost in Time	Infogrames	Action
Point Blank 2	Namco	Action
R4: Ridge Racer Type 4	Namco	Racing
Rally Racing	Konami	Racing
RC Stunt Copter	Midway	Action
Silhouette Mirage	Working Designs	Action
Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace	LucasArts	Adventure
Street Fighter Alpha 3	Capcom	Fighting
Vermin	Eidos	Action

June

Alexi Lalas International Soccer	Take 2	Sports
Alien Resurrection	Fox Interactive	Action
Bass Landing	Agetec	Sports
Carmageddon 2: Carpocalypse Now	Interplay	Action
Centipede	Hasbro Interactive	Action
Chessmaster Millennium	Mindscape	Misc.
Croc 2	Fox Interactive	Action
Fighter Maker	Agetec	Fighting
Grand Theft Auto London	Rockstar	Action
High Heat Baseball 2000	3DO	Sports
Jackie Chan's Stuntmaster	Midway	Action
Knights of Carnage	THQ	Action
Quake II	Activision	Action
Rat Attack!	Mindscape	Action
Star Ocean: The Second Story	Sony CEA	RPG
Superman	Titus	Action
The Next Tetris	Hasbro Interactive	Puzzle
Tomorrow Never Dies	MGM Interactive	Action
Ultimate Eight Ball	THQ	Sports
WWF Attitude	Acclaim	Action

July

Atari Greatest Hits Collection III	Hasbro Interactive	Misc.
Diabolical Adventures of Tobu	989 Studios	Action
Driver	GT Interactive	Action
Echo Night	Agetec	RPG
Xena Warrior Princess	989 Studios	Action

Future Releases

American Deer Hunter	Interplay	Misc.
Ape Escape	Sony	Action
Beavis and Butt-Head: Get Big in Hollywood	GT Interactive	Action
Daikatana	Eidos	Action
Dead Unity	THQ	Action
Dino Crisis	Capcom	Action
Dragon Quest VII	TBA	RPG
Final Fantasy VIII	Square Electronic Arts	RPG
IS Internal Section	Square Electronic Arts	Action
Jade Cocoon: Story of the Tamamayu	Crave Entertainment	RPG
Jeff Gordon XS Racing	ASC Games	Racing
KISS: Psycho Circus	Rockstar	Action
Le Mans 24 Hours	Infogrames	Racing
Macross Digital Missions VF-X 2	Bandai	Action
Omikron: The Nomad Soul	Eidos	Action
Pac-Man 3D	Namco	Action
Railroad Tycoon 2	Rockstar	Strategy
Rayman 2: The Great Escape	Ubi Soft	Action
Re-Volt	Acclaim	Racing
Ready 2 Rumble	Midway	Sports
Saga Frontier 2	Square Electronic Arts	RPG
Shadowman	Acclaim	Adventure
Soul of the Samurai	Konami	Adventure
StarCon	Accolade	Action
Suikoden II	Konami	RPG
Tiny Tank: Up Your Arsenal	MGM Interactive	Action
UmJammer Lammy	Sony	Misc.
Warzone 2100	Eidos	Strategy
WipeOut 3	Psygnosis	Racing
You Don't Know Jack	Berkeley Systems	Puzzle

All release dates are tentative and subject to change. More information on all future releases will be given as it becomes available.

Wild game, baby.

Next party, lose the piñata. New Point Blank™ 2 allows up to 8 of your gun-crazed pals to unload on over 70 wild and wacky shooting scenarios - from fish and fowl to ninjas and gangsters. Blast through an all-new Arcade Mode, Theme Park Mode, Endurance Mode - plus a VS. Mode for the perfect head-to-head (no pun intended) party game. Point Blank 2. Time to get pistol whipped.

PlayStation®

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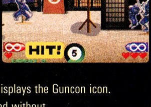

Point Blank 2™

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Guncon

Guncon for use with software that displays the Guncon icon.
Point Blank™ 2 sold with Guncon and without.

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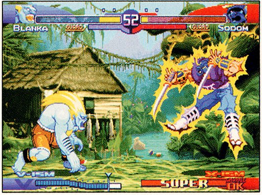
BLANKA
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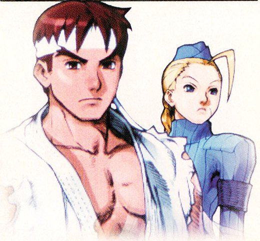
"Easily The Best Street Fighter Alpha Ever." - OFFICAL U.S. PLAYSTATION MAGAZINE



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- GAME INFORMER

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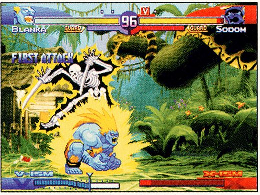
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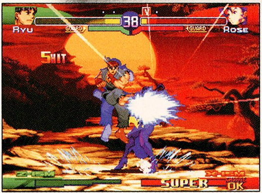
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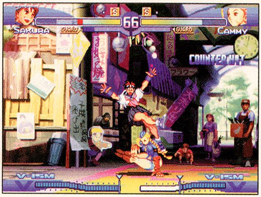
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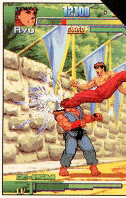
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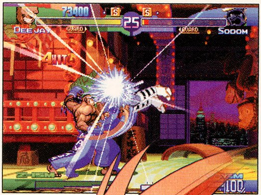
POINTS!

FIGHTERS EDGE®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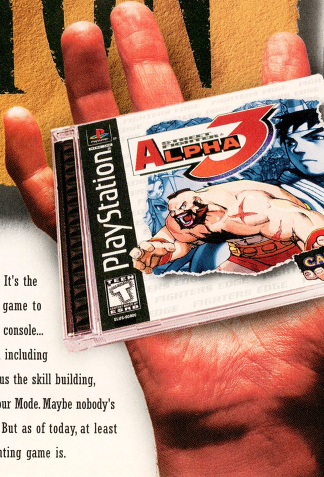
PlayStation
STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3
CAPCOM
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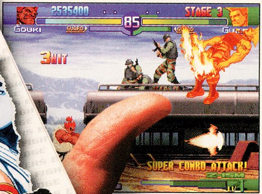
2535400
STAGE 3
GOUKI
GUARD
85
GUARD
GUILE
3HIT
SUPER COMBO ATTACK!
Z-ISM

Street Fighter Alpha 3 scores a triple K.O.! It's the most accurate translation of an arcade game to grace the circuits of the PlayStation® game console... featuring all new enhanced modes of play, including 3 fighting styles for every character – plus the skill building, World Tour Mode. Maybe nobody's perfect. But as of today, at least one fighting game is.

PlayStation ®

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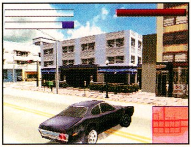
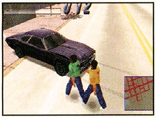
Theme	Action	**# of Players**	1
% Complete	60%	**Availability**	July
Publisher	GT Interactive	**Developer**	Reflections

Driver

Fight crime by committing crimes! Is this great or what?

If you've always wanted to star in a fast-action car chase film, now's your chance. GT Interactive is preparing to release Driver, the newest automotive adventure from Reflections, the creators of Psygnosis' Destruction Derby series. The game throws you into a nationwide ring of organized crime as you take on the role of an undercover cop working to bring the gang down.



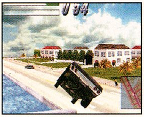


Set in New York, Los Angeles, Miami and San Francisco, the game is modeled closely on the actual cities. As you've no doubt heard by now if you're following the development of this game, the designers actually hit the streets of these four cities with a video camera in order to be able to reproduce the settings as faithfully as possible. While the environments aren't perfectly accurate (the streets, for example, are all arrow-straight), the game does include a number of instantly recognizable landmarks that allow players familiar with the towns to easily find their way around.

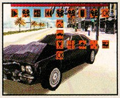
You'll need to learn to navigate these streets well in order to complete the dozens of missions. You'll also need to learn to watch out for the cops—who aren't aware you're working undercover and will be all too happy to take you out if they catch you doing something naughty. Run too many red lights, for example, and you'll find yourself with an unwelcome escort—and in most cases you'll need to find a way to ditch 'em if you want to complete your mission.

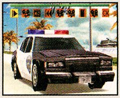
GT is careful to distance Driver from games like Grand Theft Auto; although you spend much of the game running from the police, the publishers stress that your character is himself a cop, and thus your illegal activities are actually in service of the greater good. The game is also careful to avoid serious violence; spectacular car crashes are about as bad as it gets. You can't even run over pedestrians—they're programmed to dive out of your way every time.

Even at this still-early stage, the nicely realistic car physics make Driver a blast to play. We can't wait to see the final version.



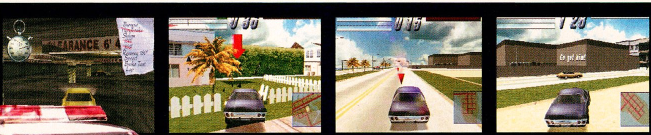
The boys at the body shop will love you after maneuvers like this.

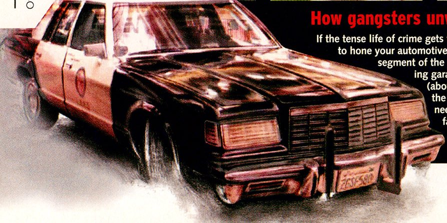




You are the camera man

One of the most interesting features of Driver is its Director's Mode, which allows you to view the replay of an entire mission, setting camera views around the environments (and even in pursuing police cars) to design your very own custom replay reel.

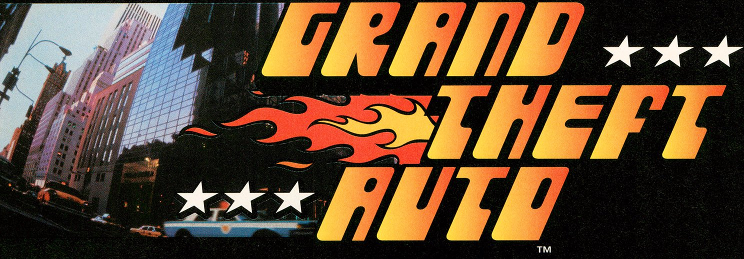




How gangsters unwind

If the tense life of crime gets to be too stressful, Driver offers a number of short driving games to hone your automotive skills. First, in order to prove your worth for the mission-based segment of the game, you'll need to run an obstacle course of sorts inside a parking garage (above far left). Other games include Cross-Town Checkpoint (above center left), which requires you to find and hit checkpoints in the shortest time possible; Pursuit (above center right), in which you need to chase and destroy a fleeing gangster; and Trailblazer (above far right) in which you need to follow a difficult path of checkpoints in a very limited amount of time. Each challenge is sure to work wonders for your driving ability.

NOW EVEN THE PRICE IS A STEAL!!!


GRAND THEFT AUTO
™

★★★ "Makes Boyz N the Hood seem like an After School Disney Special" -CNN ★★★

PlayStation
GRAND THEFT AUTO
MATURE
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You're a low-level street hood, working your way up the corporate ladder of crime, taking on 200 missions in order to show the crime bosses what you're capable of. Car-jacking, Mob-Hits, Random Assault. All on your first day!

An Equal Opportunity Destroyer.

Now also available: for the first time ever on PlayStation® game console. *Mission Pack Technology!*

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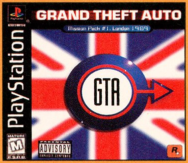
Take a Trip to London

It's London, 1969. The swinging '60's meets the psychotic '70's. You are a stylish hooligan entering a new decade of grievous bodily harm, car-jacking, and general thuggery. Awaiting you are 32 new missions, 30 new vehicles, and unlimited criminal opportunity.


PlayStation
GRAND THEFT AUTO
Mission Pack #1: London 1969
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GTA MISSION PACK REQUIRES ORIGINAL GTA GAME DISC TO OPERATE!

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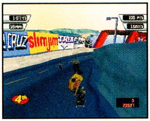
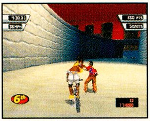
Theme	Racing	**# of Players**	1-2
% Complete	80%	**Availability**	April
Publisher	989 Studios	**Developer**	989 Studios

3Xtreme

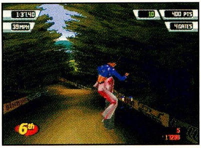
Extreme racing gets an extreme overhaul

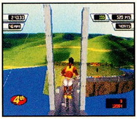




As a sequel to one of the PlayStation's original U.S. launch titles, 3Xtreme follows ESPN Extreme Games as a "freestyle racing game." Licenses are added this time around, along with the option to buy and sell equipment with points earned in the game. Santa Cruz, Toy Machine, Creature and GT join a long list of name-brand manufacturers of skateboards, in-line skates and BMX bikes—but, sadly, the luge from the first game is nowhere to be found.

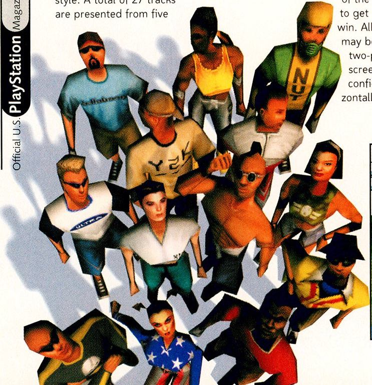
The graphics have gotten a major overhaul: The choppy and inconsistent look of the 1995 game has been replaced by a more solid presentation and a steady frame-rate. Also, each of the characters you choose from—there's a total of 13—has his or her own equipment, look and style. A total of 27 tracks are presented from five new locations—Aztec Island, Seacliff, The Metro, Lakeside Park and Arroyo Grande. All the tracks consist of long stretches of banked pavement, with ramps, drop-offs, rails and objects that can be used to propel you above other players and to perform stunts. Hidden courses and racers can also be found within the early stages of the game.

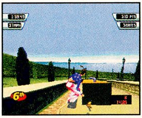


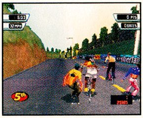


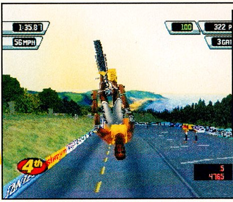
Racking up points and winning races are quite challenging due to the placement of the various obstacles and point gates along the tracks. Adding to the challenge are CPU-controlled players that block and punch you and each other in classic Road Rash style.

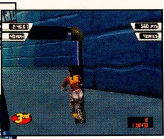
3Xtreme has four modes of play. Freestyle allows you to practice stunts for points, while Time Trial is simply a race against the clock. Exhibition and Season modes make up the bulk of the gameplay, though, so you'll need to get good at both to win. All but Freestyle may be played in two-player split-screen, which can be configured either horizontally or vertically.











Nothing says good morning quite like cracking your skull on a metal beam at 60mph.

Spankin' Sounds

The sounds of bone-crushing and pole-thumping are accompanied by the music of Ultraspank. The group's latest video is even included as a movie on the disc—a marketing strategy we're sure we'll see more of in the future.

KONAMI®

Fisherman's Bait

A Bass Challenge™

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

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PlayStation

Can you land a lunker? There's no need to exaggerate the size of your skill, with **Fisherman's Bait** you can prove it! **Number One Rated arcade game** now on PlayStation® **Two player versus mode** - fish against a friend. **Dual Shock function** lets you feel the bass biting

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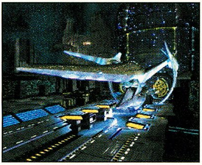
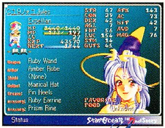
Theme RPG	**# of Players** 1
% Complete 60%	**Availability** June
Publisher Sony CEA	**Developer** Enix

Star Ocean: The Second Story

Star Ocean will finally cross the oceans to reach U.S. gamers





C19ソォ1 Jules
Expellian
HP 1440/1440
MP 133/ 197
LV 27
EXP 43570
NEXT 3844

STR 67
CON 29
DEX 42
AGL 7
INT 56
LUC 154
STM 14
GUTS 45

ATK 143
AC 73
HIT 42
AVD 7
MAG 76

Weapon Ruby Wand
Armor Amber Robe
Shield (None)
Helmet Magical Hat
Greaves Pin Heels
Accessory1 Ruby Earring
Accessory2 Prism Ring

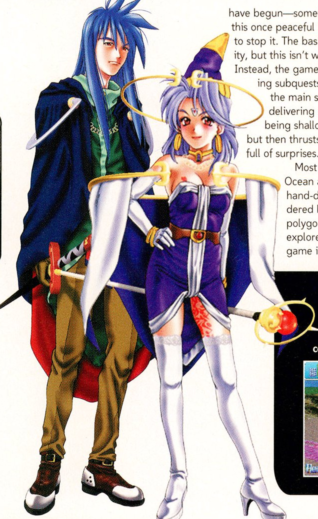
FAVORITE FOOD Unknown

The original Star Ocean was a treat for import game players. It had a long and enthralling quest, graphics that were nothing short of stunning, and a musical score that swayed with power and adventure. In short, it was an epic RPG. The recently released PlayStation sequel, aptly titled Star Ocean: The Second Story, follows its predecessor in nearly every detail, except one. It's coming to America.

In Star Ocean: The Second Story you'll pick one of two main characters, and shape their destiny throughout a great adventure. A strange meteorite has fallen on the planet of Expel, and you quickly discover the chaos it causes goes far deeper than the monsters it has created or the earthquakes that have begun—something dark is taking over this once peaceful land, and it's up to you to stop it. The basic story may lack originality, but this isn't where Star Ocean shines. Instead, the game focuses more on littering subquests and back stories into the main scenario, and succeeds in delivering a tale that starts off being shallow and slightly tedious, but then thrusts you into a twisting plot full of surprises.

Most of the graphics in Star Ocean are a combination of hand-drawn sprites over prerendered backgrounds, with a fully polygonal world map to explore. The overall look of the game is quite impressive, with characters that scale seamlessly through beautiful environments that challenge Final Fantasy VII in quality. Most of the renders in this game were done by a company called Links, one of the main teams behind the backgrounds in Square's masterpiece. The overworld map is also very similar to FFVII's, if not more dramatic. Giant structures and mountains fill every island on the world of Expel, and although you'll see a bit more pop-up in the distance, you'll have the pleasure of having more realistically sized towns and temples covering the landscape.

Times are certainly changing. A few years ago, Sony's announcement to bring out Enix/tri-Ace's latest venture to the States would have been unheard of, but now it's just a pleasant surprise. These games are finally getting the recognition they deserve. What a great time to be an RPG fan!



Range Short

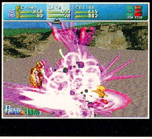
Soldier at Registration
「We can't arrange any public audience because the King is attending to emergency

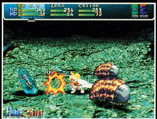
INFORMATION

Encounter a wide array of characters and monsters as you explore the planet Expel.

How do you take your battles?

Star Ocean offers a unique take on classic RPG fighting formulas by allowing you to pick from three different styles. Do you enjoy the classic turn-based conflicts found in most console RPGs? Or do you want to try something with a bit more speed and chaos? Standard, Semi-Active and Full-Active all have their own attributes, from the amount of free movement you have to the way you target and launch attacks. Great stuff!





Theme Sports	**# of Players** 1-2
% Complete 90%	**Availability** March
Publisher 989 Studios	**Developer** 989 Sports

MLB 2000

Can 989 Studios' baseball title stay on top?

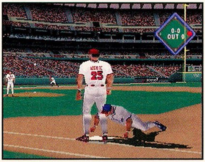
Last year's MLB '99 was the best baseball game on the PlayStation, but this year it's going to be even more difficult to retain that title, due to EA's much-improved Triple Play 2000 (reviewed on page 84 of this issue).

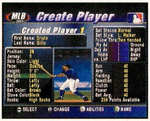
With such a good game already in place, MLB 2000's updates mostly consist of minor tweaks in gameplay, sound and graphics. The biggest change is that MLB is going to a two-man commentary, with ESPN Baseball analyst Dave Campbell joining Vin Scully in the broadcast booth. Right now, the commentary is quite good: The play-by-play is steady, and the color commentary provides some interesting bits of information about the players up to bat.

Graphically, the game has been just slightly enhanced. New player animations have been added (check the sidebar to see which players were used for motion-capture), and the graphics have been improved. Unfortunately, MLB 2000 won't be using the players' actual faces, but the player body types often look similar to their real-life counterparts, thanks to some keen-looking 3D polygonal models. Also, the action from the batter's box to the field moves quickly and fluently, much like the MLB before it, despite the improved aesthetics.

As for depth, well, MLB is fast approaching Triple Play 2000 in terms of features and options. Everything important has been implemented in the game, including a Home Run Derby, season play, player creation, farm system recruiting and trades.

There's no doubt that MLB 2000 will be a fun game with plenty of depth, but we won't know whether it will top Triple Play 2000 until we get the final version in for review. That won't be until the following issue, so be sure to check back next month.




MLB Create Player

Created Player 1

First Name: Cristo
Last Name: Gillio

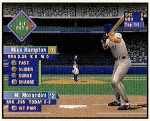
Position:	2B
Jersey:	0
Skin Color:	Light
Face:	Goatee
Height:	5' 0"
Weight:	305
Throw:	Lefty
Bat:	Lefty
Bat Color:	Brown
Glove Color	Black
Socks:	High Socks

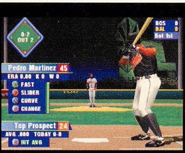
Bat Stance: Normal
Bat Style: L. Walker
Follow Thru: Two Handed

Fly Av	Ground
Day Av	Night
Home	Away
vs. LHP	RHP

Run	40
Arm	40
Fielding	40
Reaction	40
Clutch	40
Power	40
Bat Avg.	40

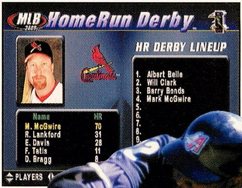
236 Points Available





Spring Training

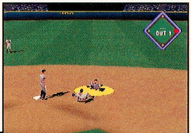
In MLB 2000, you can relive the experience of fighting for a spot on a big league roster with the game's Spring Training mode. You get six games to earn enough points to make it onto the team of your choice.


MLB HomeRun Derby

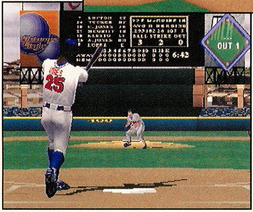
HR DERBY LINEUP

1. Albert Belle
2. Will Clark
3. Barry Bonds
4. Mark McGwire
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.

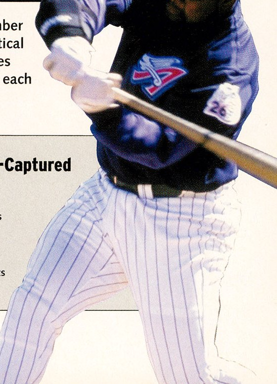
Name	HR
M. McGwire	70
R. Lankford	31
E. Davis	28
F. Tatis	11
D. Bragg	8



Infield collisions are an unfortunate yet amusing occurrence on the field.



90 The number of statistical categories used for each player



MLB Players Motion-Captured

MO VAUGHN – Anaheim Angels
SHAWN ESTES – San Francisco Giants
DARRYL HAMILTON – Colorado Rockies
BRETT TOMKO – Cincinnati Reds
DARRYL KILE – Colorado Rockies
RAY DURHAM – Chicago White Sox
KARIM GARCIA – Arizona Diamondbacks
BENJI GIL – Chicago White Sox

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EVERYONE
E
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ESRB

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PC CD·ROM

PlayStation®

DEVELOPED BY
Real Sports™

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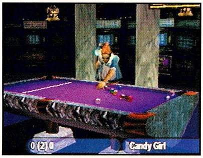
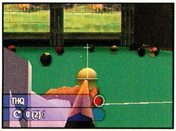
XS
RACING™
RACE WITHOUT LIMITS.

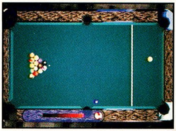
Theme	Sports	**# of Players**	1-16
% Complete	70%	**Availability**	June
Publisher	THQ	**Developer**	Mirage

Ultimate Eight Ball

More billiards action than you can shake a stick at







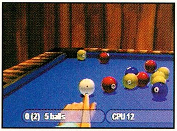
Ever wanted to play pool with a supermodel? Well, take a look at that cutie with a pool cue (top).

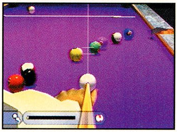
You walk into a smokey pool hall and find yourself in a high stakes game of nine ball. Normally you'd be nervous because geometry was never "your bag," but tonight's different. Tonight, there are guidelines on the table telling you where every single ball will go. Tonight, you'll pull off trick shots that will leave jaws dropped and put money in your pocket. Tonight, you're playing...a video game.

Melodrama aside, Ultimate Eight Ball is shaping up to come closer than any pool title on the PlayStation yet in simulating all aspects of the game. In its current form it's already impressive, with tight physics models that move balls with striking (no pun intended) realism. The AI, which is still rough at this time, actually thinks through shots and is said to be incredibly good but fair. Right now, it hasn't learned to be fair and will often beat you without letting you get a single shot in (which, when you think about it, is more realistic than not).

Ultimate Eight Ball features 14 different games, including standards like eight ball, nine ball and rotation; also included are cut throat, straight pool, 10 pin, 10 ball and various other games with U.K. rules. But it's not just game styles that are different; there are 15 unique tables that come in various shapes and sizes. Don't worry, the basic game revolves around that tried and true rectangle—only specialty opponents playing on their home turf use the odd-shaped tables. To keep things visually stimulating, there are 10 separate environments in which the action takes place. The game also supports up to 16 players, so you never know who might show up to play a quick game.

The most prominent and easily the coolest graphical treat is being able to see your fully rendered 3D opponent taking his or her shot from across the table. No more watching a drone stick and an occasional face in a window representing your challenger. It seems gimmicky, but in practice you can't help but feel more immersed in the game when your opponent's physical presence mirrors what you might see in real life. Still, most people's lives don't involve shooting pool with gorgeous models, so you may have to suspend some disbelief when Eight Ball hits in June.





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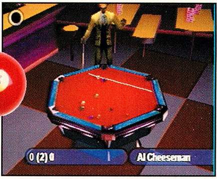


Along with the familiar rectangle are 15 other odd-shaped tables, like the hexagon above.

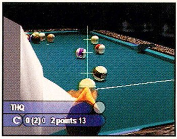
More shocking pool facts!*

- Billiards ranks second in frequent participants behind basketball. Can you believe it? This country is going to seed.
- Over 9 million people play pool more than 25 time a year. Most people don't see a dentist more than once in a whole year. Must be a lot of toothless pool players out there.
- 4.5 million Americans consider themselves "afficionados." Meanwhile, 70% of Americans are overweight. Maybe they should become afficionados of exercise.

(*Actual stats courtesy of THQ. Smarmy remarks courtesy of *OPM*.)

42

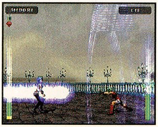
million Americans play billiards at least once a year

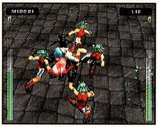


Theme Fighting	**# of Players** 1-2
% Complete 80%	**Availability** Q2 '99
Publisher Titus	**Developer** Yukes

Evil Zone

Exaggerated anime-style action finds a home





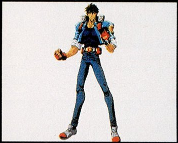
It's not new for a fighting game to have anime-inspired character designs, but no fighter has ever gone to the lengths Evil Zone does to capture every aspect of an anime show. Starting with the opening animated movie, it feels like you're watching anime rather than preparing for a game.

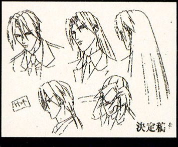
The Story mode does a good job of mimicking the setup of an episode of your typical show, but the fighting action is where Evil Zone really shines. It's very hard to describe, but the way your character moves, executes and reacts to attacks is very stylized. You often wonder why no developer has thought of doing as much cool stuff as Yukes has with their characters. Sometimes the camera angle will change to highlight an attack, but that angle will be different the next time you do that same move (they do repeat after a time, though). It's no stretch to say Evil Zone is dripping with style.

Yukes obviously didn't want to alienate anime fans who are attracted to the title but may not be too adept at fighting games, so the control scheme is extremely simplistic. You have an attack button and a block button—and that's it. Variations in attacks occur when you press the directional pad in conjunction with the attack button, such as Forward plus attack or Up plus attack. While this simplicity may seem like a turnoff to some hardcore gamers, there are a surprising amount of moves and combos, some being obvious and others not so apparent.

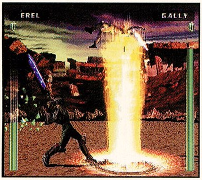
About 75 percent of your attacks are of the projectile nature, which can be tricky, as critics of Psychic Force can attest. So far, we've found that almost everything has a counter and cheap patterns *can* be avoided. The depth and overall balance are things we can't give a definitive word on until we get a review copy in, but our fingers are crossed that Yukes will get the job done.

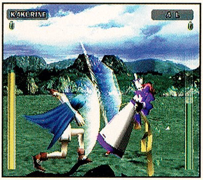
Hidden art

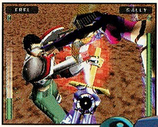




Once you beat the game in Story mode, you'll gain access to the Gallery. Some really cool character sketches and full-color pieces await the skilled gamer.

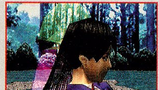


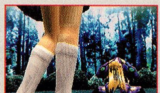




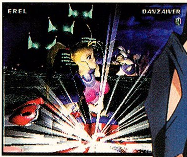
Hair, beautiful hair

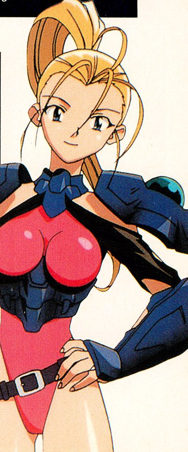
One of Evil Zone's fanciest tricks involves some of the characters' hair. As you can see from the pictures below, a few fighters have flowing hair with individual strands being visible. Two have pony tails that become unfurled as they take damage. How cool is that!





"I was going to beat you silly, but I broke a fingernail. See, it's glowing."

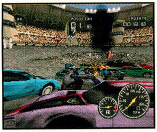




Theme	Racing	**# of Players**	1-2
% Complete	40%	**Availability**	Q3 '99
Publisher	Accolade	**Developer**	Pitbull Syndicate

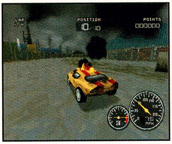
Demolition Racer

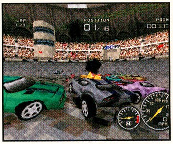
A follow up to Destruction Derby a la Rogue Trip



Extra attention was paid to making the tracks more cohesive.

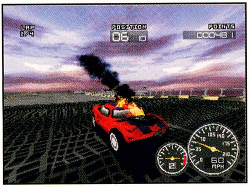
After Destruction Derby 2, no other car racing game was able to match that wild auto smash-'em-up, mainly because none has tried. Enter Pitbull Syndicate, which is coming off a strong stint with Test Drive 4 and 5. Pitbull, which happens to made up of some of the core team members behind Destruction Derby 1 and 2, has had a lot of time to think about new features. The result is Demolition Racer. Although they're building on the great Test Drive 5 engine, they've totally customized it for this game.

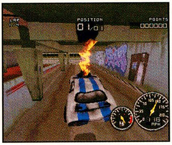




One of the biggest features is head-to-head two-player split-screen action, even with 16 cars on the track. There are 20 tracks that are designed specifically to allow for a variety of spontaneous action that will be unpredictable from race to race. Other new additions to the series, which are becoming almost standard for all racers, are branching pathways and shortcuts. One of the more popular obstacles from DD2 was the corkscrew jump, which Pitbull also wanted to somehow incorporate into this title, with the possibility of an even wilder obstacle in the works. Demolition Racer has five modes including Demolition Racing, Bowl Match, Suicide Racing, Career Mode and Stock Car Racing.

The soundtrack is looking promising, with exclusive tracks by Fear Factory and Empiron. *OPM* recently attended a recording session for the game and came away impressed. If nothing else, the game will at least sound awesome.





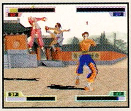
Theme	Fighting	**# of Players**	1-4
% Complete	40%	**Availability**	Q2 '99
Publisher	THQ	**Developer**	Polygon Magic

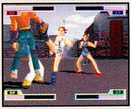
Shao Lin

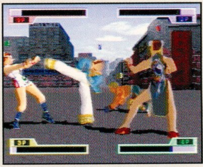
You'll never defeat my drunken fist

An unbelievable number of letters came pouring in to *OPM* lamenting the death of Thrill Kill, which would have been PlayStation's first four-player fighter. Perhaps because it lacked the same controversial themes and had a later release date, Shao Lin was sort of overlooked. THQ's brawler was first unveiled at last year's E3, but it has undergone some major changes, no doubt to capitalize on the lack of competition. The character builds have been reworked, resulting in beefier models and greater texture detail. There is also extensive maximizing of the engine, which we aren't able to speak about in detail yet—but we can say it's yet another first for a PlayStation fighter. The meat of the game and the feature that further distinguishes Shao Lin is its RPG mode, which requires you to take a fighter from youth and raise him or her to become a champion. There will be towns where you can talk with people, leading ultimately to two different endings. Along the way, there are various events that happen which change depending on the martial arts style you choose for your character.

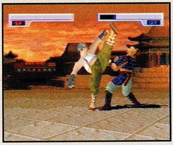
There won't be a shortage of appealing characters since you have more than 30 fighters to choose from once they've all been unlocked. Even though the total number of selectable fighters is high, the character design remains solid thanks to famous anime artist Hirotoshi Sano (Gundam 0083, NAZCA, Vision of Escaflowne). Even at this early stage, Shao Lin already looks better than Polygon Magic's previous fighter, Vs. We're looking forward to seeing more

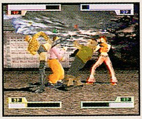






Grab a friend or three and mop and beat each other senseless. Yup, sounds like a typical Friday out with your buddies.

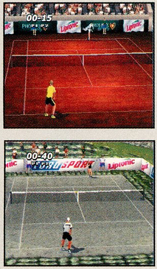




Theme	Sports	**# of Players**	1-2
% Complete	80%	**Availability**	April
Publisher	Ubi Soft	**Developer**	Ubi Soft

All-Star Tennis 99

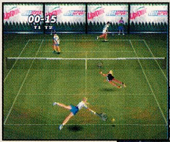
Ubi Soft looks to serve up a solid tennis game



Play on one of eight different actual courts, like Wimbledon, California or Paris.

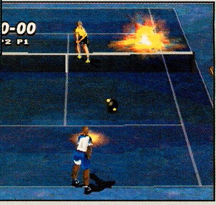
Of all the sports out there, the one that rarely gets noticed in console gaming has got to be tennis. Even though it's a pretty popular sport throughout the world, game developers have yet to embrace tennis as much as they have football or baseball. Last year, Ubi Soft released a very forgettable Tennis Arena—sporting average graphics, weak gameplay and no official license. All-Star Tennis 99, however, looks promising. Boasting licensed players and improved graphics, All-Star Tennis 99 may have what it takes to bring the excitement of tennis to the PlayStation.

All-Star Tennis 99 features eight licensed players—Michael Chang, Jonas Björkman, Amanda Coetzer, Richard Krajicek, Gustavo Kuerten, Conchita Martinez, Jana Novotna and Mark Philippoussis—plus four fictional athletes. Players can compete alone or go head-to-head with up to four friends on center court. In addition, there are eight different courts, including Wimbledon, California, Paris and Japan. Three gameplay modes, six different shots and progressive levels of single and doubles competition round out an impressive list of in-game features and options.



The look of All-Star Tennis 99 is currently a bit rough. The graphics were sourced from 3D motion-capture video, instead of being actual animations, so the motions look kinda stiff and forced rather than fluid and smooth. Hopefully, Ubi Soft will address this issue before releasing the game.

Aside from the graphics, All-Star Tennis 99 looks to be a promising tennis game. Everything else is in there, from the official license and tight control to a good variety of gameplay options.



Theme	Puzzle	**# of Players**	1-2
% Complete	85%	**Availability**	June
Publisher	Hasbro Int.	**Developer**	Blue Planet Soft.

The Next Tetris

Yet another version of the greatest puzzler of all time

*Something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue...*Sure, wedding season is just starting, but what's that got to do with Alexey Pajitnov's classic puzzler? Well, in the grand journalistic tradition of stretching an unrelated theme throughout a story, let's see what we can do with this one.

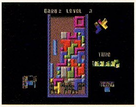
Something old: All the classic one-player stuff is here. Four basic shapes. One objective—clear away lines by creating a solid row across the board. Simple, elegant and addictive.

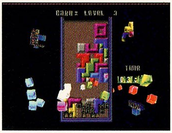
Something new: Cascading blocks. While the four basic shapes in TNT remain the same, some pieces come in several segmented colors, allowing sections of a piece to break away and fill in empty spaces below. These sections can continue to cascade down as lines are eliminated. However, like colors will bond with each other, so if, say, a blue piece touches another blue piece, a solid chunk will form, preventing the piece from sliding down.

TNT's two-player game offers its own twist on head-to-head puzzle combat. Rather than dropping "garbage" blocks on your opponent's board after you clear a few lines, TNT throws your foe's playing field into a spin, making it hard for him to see what he's doing. The more lines you eliminate, the more your opponent's board whirls and twirls. Graphics have been tweaked a bit as well, with blocks that now jiggle, gyrate and explode.

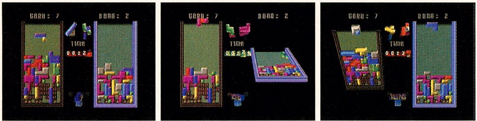
Something borrowed: That classic Tetris music is back, only now it's set to a groovy techno beat.

Something blue: Oh yeah, TNT was developed by Blue Planet Software.





Blocks fuse together, wiggle and jiggle, and even explode.

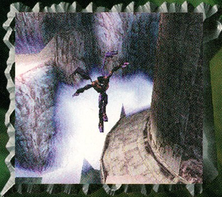


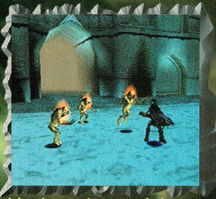
Clear a few a lines and your opponent's board will go into a wild, wacky spin.

DESTROYING YOUR ENEMIES ISN'T ENOUGH...

"...very impressive indeed."
–EGM

As Raziel, stalk the shadows of Nosgoth hunting your vampire brethren. Impale them with spears. Incinerate them with torches. Drown them in water. No matter how you destroy them, you must feed on their souls to sustain your quest – the ruin of your creator, Kain.





Morph onto the spectral plane and confront unique enemies and gameplay challenges

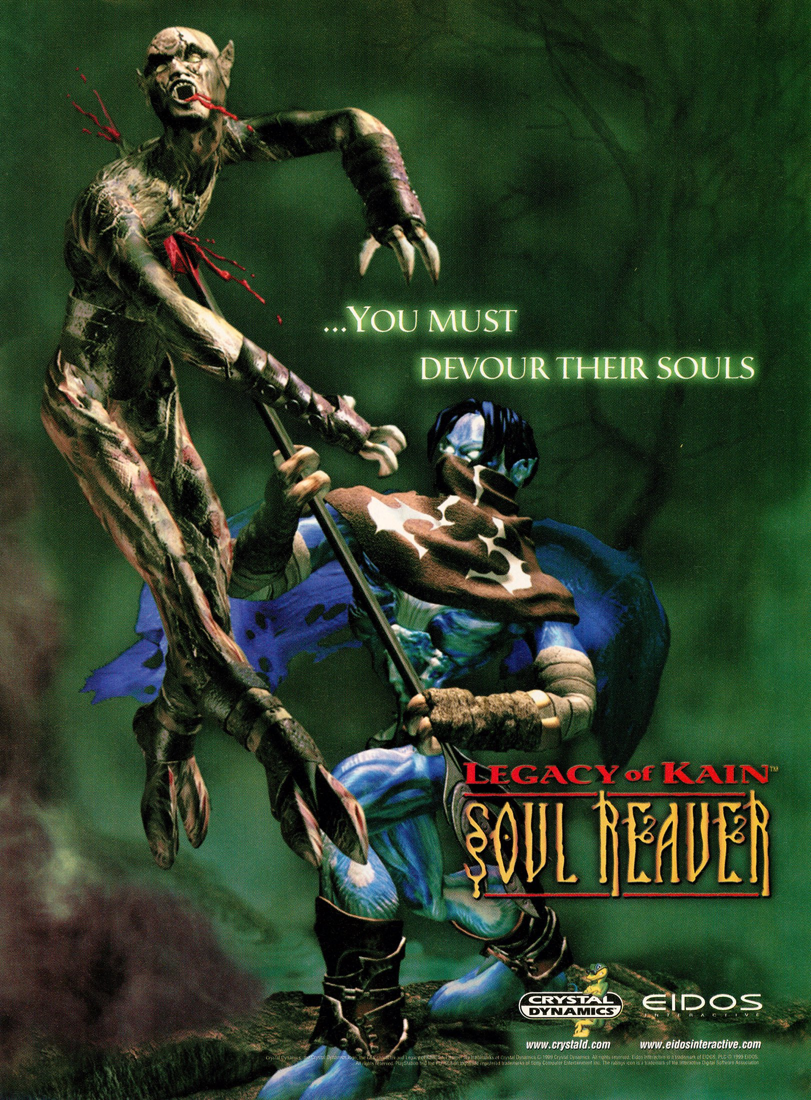
- Seamless gameplay: No load times
- Shift real-time between the material and spectral planes
- Dark gothic story

"Vampire fans get ready – Soul Reaver could be the ultimate thriller..."
–GamePro

PlayStation®

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

PC CD ROM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LEGACY of KAIN™
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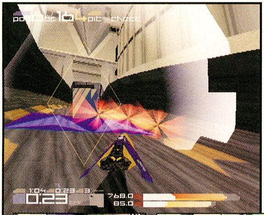
Theme Action	**# of Players** 1-2
% Complete N/A	**Availability** Q4 '99
Publisher Psygnosis	**Developer** Psygnosis

WipeOut 3

Psygnosis updates their PlayStation classic once again with better visuals and gameplay

When the first WipeOut appeared, it showed gamers the technical prowess of the PlayStation, boasting incredibly fast gameplay, even for a first-generation PlayStation game.

Continuing to push the PS even more, the Psygnosis development team now presents WipeOut 3. Psygnosis has respected the heritage of the original in creating this third title, with key members of the original WipeOut team involved in the project. Designers Republic will once again be responsible for the art direction of the game, which will ensure the look of WipeOut will be maintained.



WipeOut 3 will feature eight completely new tracks and three new racing teams in addition to the five available in WipeOut XL. There will also be seven new weapons, including five from the previous game, for a total of over 12 weapons in all. Gameplay modes will include arcade, time trial, tournament and one-on-one (spilt-screen mode). WipeOut 3 will also support the PlayStation link cable.

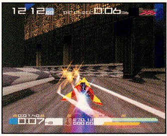
For WipeOut 3, the development team wanted to give the game a completely new look and feel while still maintaining the heart and soul of the original game. With respect to the teams, each one has been totally redesigned to give them a distinct look. In addition to the structural differences of the racing crafts, each team will have its own unique weapon. The tracks in WipeOut 3 have been given a face-lift as well. Instead of tracks going through canyons and cities as in previous games, the developers have gone with a heavy industrial look with multileveled platforms, jumps and even an impressive downward spiral.

The WipeOut 3 team contains members from the original WipeOut game.

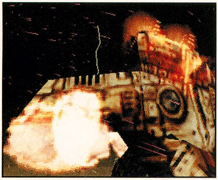
Graphically, WipeOut 3 is beyond words. Even at this early stage in development, the frame-rates are impressive, moving at a smooth 30 fps, even in two-player spilt-screen mode. The new weapons sport cool lighting effects, and the pop-up problems from previous games seem to have been addressed. Another key advancement is that WipeOut 3 will play in high-res mode throughout the game, even in spilt-screen mode. This feature alone is fantastic.

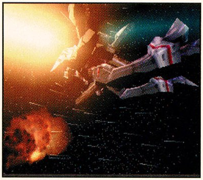
Control has always been tight with the WipeOut games and with the inclusion of Dual Shock analog support, the control has just become tighter. The additional level of control you get with the analog stick is astounding. It's also great to now be able to feel the controller vibrate in your hands when you bump into walls or when you receive a weapon shot from an opponent. There is also a new Hyper Thrust, which gives players a quick turbo boost at the expense of a bit of energy.

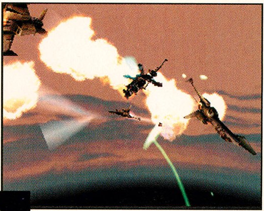
A Psygnosis game wouldn't be a Psygnosis game without cutting-edge music, especially a WipeOut game, for that matter. DJ Sasha, one of the most prominent DJs in Europe, is acting as musical director for the project. That will involve his producing exclusive music tracks for WipeOut 3, as well as working with several international guest acts for the project.

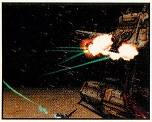


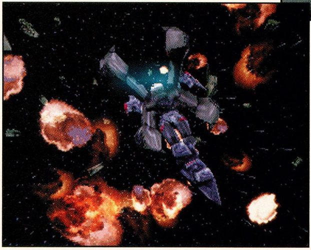
Like previous WipeOuts, WipeOut 3 will be loaded to the hilt with fancy lighting effects (above).

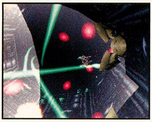








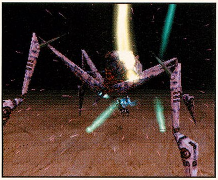


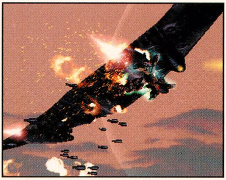


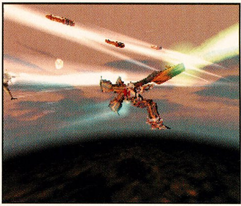
Omega Boost

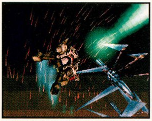
This isn't exactly the sort of game you would expect from the same company that makes Gran Turismo, but it definitely looks amazing. In this game, you pilot a huge robot in space, armed with two standard weapons and a huge weapon called an Omega Boost. The graphics are absolutely topnotch and the freespace environments can make you dizzy with all the fast action.

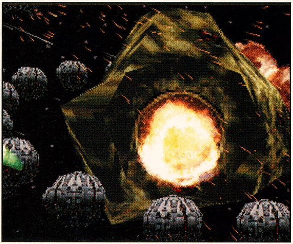
Theme Action	**# of Players** 1
% Complete 50%	**Availability** N/A
Publisher Sony CEA	**Developer** Polyphony Dig.

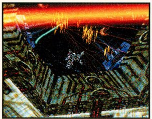


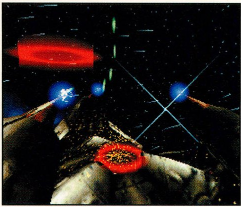








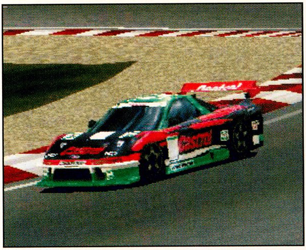


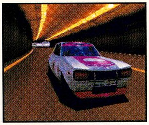


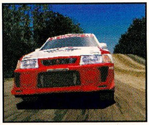
Gran Turismo 2

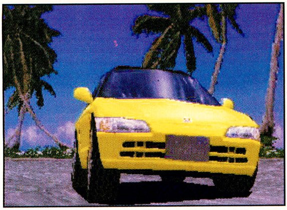
Here's some more new shots of Gran Turismo 2. The game will feature more than 400 different cars, and you can expect that there will be many more U.S.-licensed ones. Already, we can confirm there will be nine Chevys, 11 Dodges, seven Ford/Mercurys, five Shelbys, one Vector and six Plymouths, in addition to some muscle cars. There will also be a drag racing mode and 20 different tracks, one of which is a dirt track. The makers of GT2 said they want this to be an encyclopedia of cars—looks like it's already damn close.

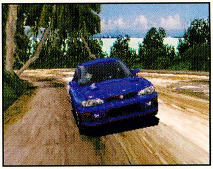
Theme Racing	**# of Players** 1-2
% Complete 70%	**Availability** Q2 '99
Publisher Sony CEA	**Developer** Polyphony Dig.





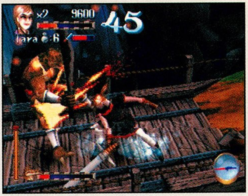




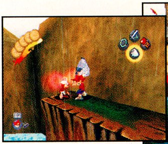


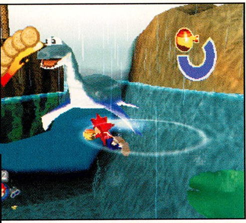
Knights of Carnage

Ready for a good ol'-fashioned hack-'n'-slash game? If so, perhaps THQ's new action game is the one for you. Armed with all sorts of medieval weaponry, your male or female warrior must bludgeon and slash his/her way through hordes of gargoyles, hellhounds, giant spiders and other creatures just aching to be hacked to bits. Various weapons like swords, cannons and axes will aid you in the quest.



Theme Action	**# of Players** 1-2
% Complete 60%	**Availability** June
Publisher THQ	**Developer** Rushware





Ape Escape

Control Jake or Spike in their quest to stop the evil Spectre and his band of monkeys gone mad. Ape Escape is a very innovative title that can only be controlled with dual analog sticks. One stick is used for movement, and one aims the gadget being used (slingshot, propeller, net) to catch the monkeys. This is a very promising title, and we'll have more on it soon.

Theme Action	**# of Players** 1
% Complete N/A	**Availability** Q3 '99
Publisher Sony CEA	**Developer** Sony CEA

Xena: Warrior Princess

Here's some updated shots from 989 Studios' forthcoming game based on the TV show. The game has been oft-delayed, but looks like it's finally coming together.

Theme	Action	**# of Players**	1
% Complete	65%	**Availability**	Q3 '99
Publisher	989 Studios	**Developer**	USDA

Black Bass with Blue Marlin

Featuring Hank Parker

Hot-B has a reputation for doing fishing games and this will be their seventh one. The developer touts that this will be the first game that combines freshwater and saltwater fishing. Let's hope the PlayStation can handle such a whale of a feat.

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Theme	Sports	**# of Players**	1-2
% Complete	80%	**Availability**	April
Publisher	Hot-B	**Developer**	Hot-B

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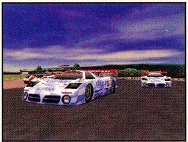
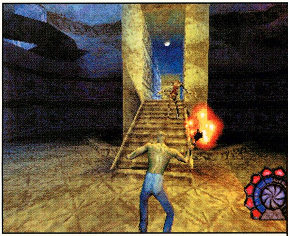
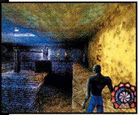
Le Mans 24 Hours

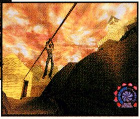
Infogrames is trying to make the complete Le Mans racing simulation, so they have spared no expense, licensing the Le Mans name, race teams, circuits and ACO rules. The game will be a test of endurance, where retrogressive and collision damage simulate the wear and tear that affects a car during a 24-hour race. Outfitting your car correctly and making the right pitstops can counter that.

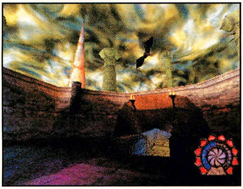


Theme	Racing	**# of Players**	1-2
% Complete	50%	**Availability**	Q3 '99
Publisher	Infogrames	**Developer**	Eutechnyx







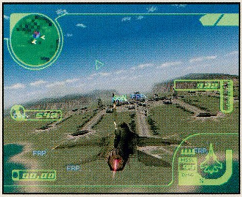


Shadow Man

After a voodoo priestess plants a spiritual mask in his chest, a former hitman becomes the voodoo warrior Shadow Man. A third-person shooter of sorts, Shadow Man involves puzzle solving, black magic and "flesh-wasting" weapons aimed at wiping out legions of undead serial killers and other vermin. Multiple game endings and various cutscenes move the game's plot along.

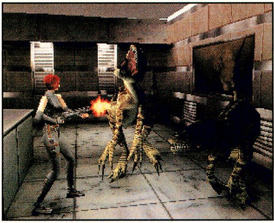
Theme	Action	**# of Players**	1
% Complete	40%	**Availability**	Q4 '99
Publisher	Acclaim	**Developer**	Iguana

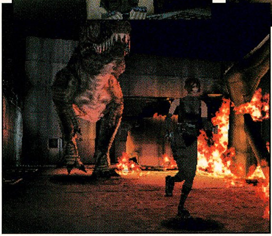
Theme	Action	**# of Players**	1
% Complete	40%	**Availability**	TBA
Publisher	Namco	**Developer**	Namco

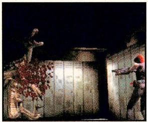


Ace Combat 3: Electrosphere

To be quite honest, not much is known about the latest sequel to Namco's popular aerial game, except that it's going to come to the U.S. at some point. The game will be shown at the Tokyo Game Show in March, so expect us to have a lot more information for you after that show. In the meantime just enjoy this one, solitary screenshot.







Dino Crisis

It seems that Capcom's next Resident Evil-style game will involve dinosaurs, not zombies. Dino Crisis takes place in the near future on where else but an island. You assume the role of Regina, a member of a special forces team, and your mission is to capture Professor Kirk, whose lab has unleashed the dinos. The sheer size of the dinosaurs should add something new to the genre. You can look forward to being stalked by huge T-rexes, raptors and other monsters of the like. When you're injured, you'll leave a blood trail, and your character will be more cautious when she suspects danger. It should be a chilling adventure from Capcom, the company that revitalized this sort of game.

Theme	Action	**# of Players**	1	**% Complete**	N/A
Availability	Q4 '99	**Publisher**	Capcom	**Developer**	Capcom

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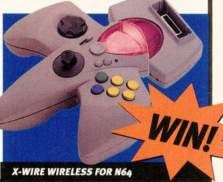

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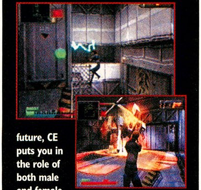
Cybernetic Empire

Wolfteam, Availability: June

Once-famous Japanese developer Wolfteam returns with this exciting-looking action/adventure. Set in the future, CE puts you in the role of both male and female task-force members on their mission to stop a group of terrorists. With real-time levels and gameplay that includes a grapple beam, swimming and shooting elements, CE looks like it could be hot.



Monster Rancher 2

Tecmo, Availability: Now

The original monster-raising sim returns in this sequel just released in Japan. All the key elements from the first game are back—creating a monster based on any game or music CD you insert, training it and then fighting your pet against others—but the sequel includes refined graphics and a few added tweaks. Among them is a PocketStation numbers minigame to earn money you can use back in the PlayStation game to buy food and other items. No word yet on a possible U.S. release.

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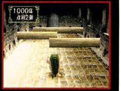
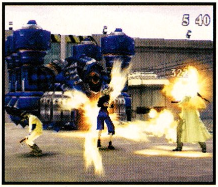


Final Fantasy VIII

Square Soft



Still the No. 1 selling game in Japan and likely to remain so for quite some time, FFVIII has already sold almost three million copies after just its first month in stores. For the latest edition to their flagship series, Square Soft wasn't afraid to alter some key areas of gameplay, and it seems to have paid off. Here are some of the biggest changes you can look forward to when FFVIII comes out here this fall.

Magic and Spells

Spells in Final Fantasy VIII are handled very differently than in most RPGs. They are treated more like regular items—you get them by drawing (basically stealing) them from monsters, or find them lying around at certain spots in dungeons. You can store them, equip them and even trade them between characters.

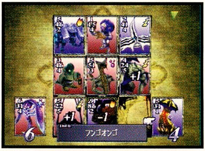
Guardian Forces and the "Junction" System

More than any Final Fantasy before it, part VIII concentrates on summoning magics, now called "Guardian Forces" (or GFs). These powerful creatures have appeared in previous games in the series (remember Ifrit, Shiva and Leviathan from FFVII?), but now they have added importance. First is their ability to be equipped, or "junctioned," to your party. A character without a Guardian Force is basically naked, and can't even use items or magic. Once you equip a GF to any of your characters, it not only can be used as a spell in battle, but, as a Guardian gains experience, it also gives that character extra skills and abilities (increased magic power, hit points and battle avoidance, for example). Best of all you get to decide which skills your GFs learn, so you can customize them to suit your own tastes.

Another benefit of equipping Guardian Forces is that they allow you to enhance your character's attributes by connecting the GF with specific spells. For example, if you link a heal spell to the hit points attribute, you can increase your HP total. Or by connecting the thunder GF to someone's magic power, you can increase the effects of his/her spells. How much you benefit from these links depends on both the number of the spells you have stored and the strength of the spell.

Card Battle Minigame

Instead of all the different minigames in FFVII (Chocobo raising, snowboarding, etc.), part VIII involves only one, but it's a big one—the card battle game. Almost anywhere you go in the game you can challenge strangers to this one-on-one match to try to win some special collectable cards from them. But there's a larger purpose for this highly addictive game-within-a-game beyond just being a fun diversion; later you can change some special cards into items that can be traded to improve your weapons.



Theme RPG
Availability Now
# of Players 1
Developer Square

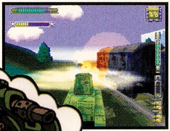
Combat Choro Q

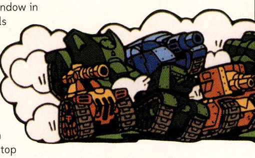
Takara

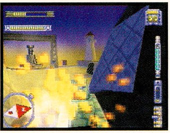
The first Choro Q games were car racers, then came speedboats, and now we have tanks. With its stripped-down graphics and cutesy look, Combat continues the Choro Q tradition of tossing reality out the window in favor of quick controls and simple fun—at least in theory. Unfortunately it didn't turn out that way this time; the tanks in this game steer with all the speed and grace of a dead elephant. Your top speed is roughly five miles per hour, and each time you're hit by enemy fire you are brought to a complete stop. Why? Good question! Here's how it plays out: You get hit, you slow to a stop. By the time you finally start to move again—*boom!*—you're hit once more and stopped. Repeat until your controller lays smashed into tiny pieces at your feet.

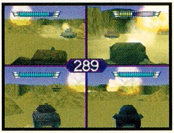
All these control problems are a shame, because CCQ does have some interesting features in its one-player game. You battle through a series of missions with different objectives, like protect a train, destroy a plane before it can take off and, of course, good ol' kill-everything-that-moves. After each mission you receive a rating and money based on your performance. You can use that cash to customize and improve your tank in every area, from the weapons to the exhaust to its paint job. Nice, but not enough to make it worth your time.

Theme Action **# of Players** 1-4
Availability Now **Developer** Takara









Space Battleship Yamato

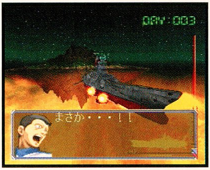
Bandai

Fans of the old animated series Star Blazers are no doubt aware that it was based on the Space Battleship Yamato series from Japan. Now, Bandai has based an extremely faithful RPG on this potent license—one that can be appreciated by U.S. gamers (at least for the feelings of nostalgia it evokes in Star Blazers fans) as well as Japanese consumers, who have already pushed the game to the top of the charts in Japan.

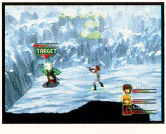
The plot of the game is a time-honored one: Earth is under attack from hostile aliens bent on colonization, and it won't be long before the radiation from the bombs puts an end to life as we know it. As the damage begins to approach the point of no return, a communication is received from the far-off planet Iscandar, which promises technology that can save Earth from its fate, but only if a ship from Earth can make the 148,000 light-year journey to Iscandar to retrieve it. Luckily, the message also includes plans for a faster-than-light starship engine, but even so the voyage will take a full year—which, of course, is exactly how long the earth has before the radiation destroys everything.

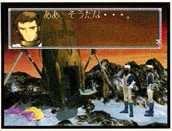
Your job is to command the Yamato, complete the journey, and save the world (of course). Along the way you'll encounter plenty of hostile aliens and other space hazards, but never fear—you have full control over every key position on the ship. You'll conduct battles both in space and on strange planets, all in real time.

The game is quite complex and also rather text-heavy, so let's hope that some publisher picks Yamato up for a U.S. release.



まさか・・・！！





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Theme RPG **# of Players** 1
Availability Now **Developer** Bandai

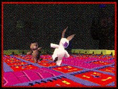
LSD

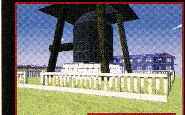
Asmik Ace, Availability: Now

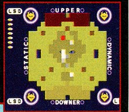
Take a first-person shooter, remove all the enemies as well as the guns, the items, the keycards and puzzles—and just about any point to the game at all, for that matter—and you've got a good grasp of what this super-freaky import is like. The idea behind the game, if it can even be called a game (it's labeled a "dream emulator"), is original at least. There's no text and no real actions to perform in LSD (other than walk and look at stuff). You simply wander around different bizarre dream-world landscapes until you bump into an object, then the game melts into the next dream. Once you wake up (usually after you fall into a pit or stay in one place for too long), your dream is rated on a chart that ranks it in four categories: upper, downer, dynamic and static.

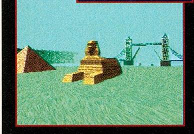
The disappointing part about LSD is that, even though it tries to be surreal with its crazy colors and moody, ambient soundtrack, it's hard to look very dream-like when the worlds are made up of huge blocky polygons, all chugging along at about 10 frames a second. This game looks like it was made in someone's basement in Japan, its creation fueled by instant ramen noodles and powerful psychoactive drugs.

It's fun to see someone try something different, and if LSD is anything, it's most definitely different. But if you can't spend $50 for novelty, just say no.









Driving on the ground is so 90's.

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ESRB
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LAP 00:05:10
BEST
RACE 00:05:10
4th
305 KPH

LAP 2 OF 4
LAP 00:06:46
BEST
RACE 00:53:56
274
LAP 2 OF 4
LAP 00:06:03
BEST
RACE 00:53:60
2nd
382 KPH

PSYGNOSIS

EVERYONE

E

CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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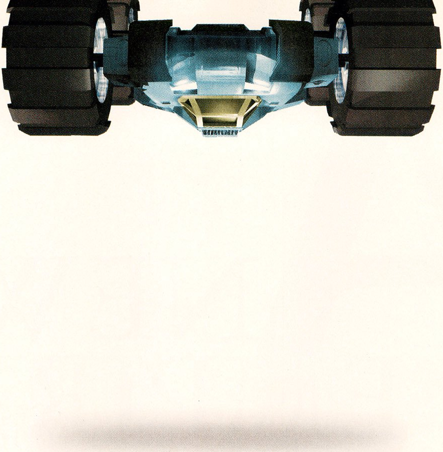
PlayStation



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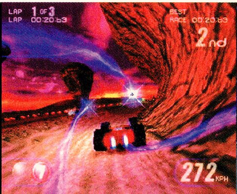

LAP 1 OF 3
LAP 00:20:63
BEST
RACE 00:20:63
2nd
272 KPH

LAP 4 OF 4
LAP 00:04:90
BEST
RACE 01:22:13
3rd
315 KPH

A NEW EMPIRE

by Joe Rybicki

The Mother of All Licenses Comes Home Again

Quick, name one person you know who doesn't like *Star Wars.* Having trouble? I suspect most of you are; the Star Wars universe has an almost universal charm that can't easily be explained. Perhaps it's the fact that in spite of the alien setting of the films, the ongoing story is, at its heart, a familiar one. Perhaps it's that the characters are equally familiar; perhaps we even identify with them ourselves. More likely, though, is that the Star Wars universe is more than the sum of these parts, possessing an almost magical quality that's impossible to dissect.

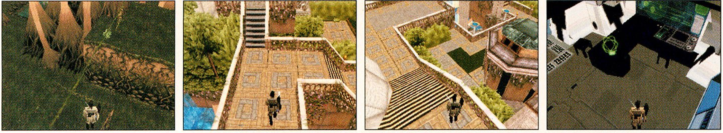
This would explain why, no matter how many times I've seen the original "teaser" trailer for *Star Wars:* Episode I *The Phantom Menace,* I still get chills every time (and I know I'm not the only one). And it would explain the countless fans worldwide who wait anxiously for each new drop of carefully rationed information that comes out of Skywalker Ranch regarding the new film—and the countless others who refuse to hear a single word about *The Phantom Menace* for fear it will spoil the surprise, lessen the magic.

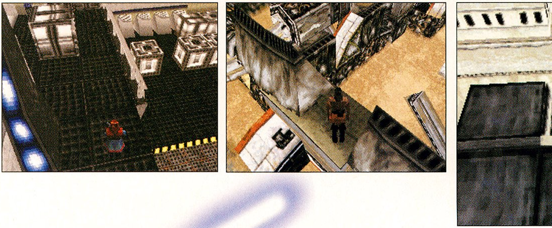
Being more a member of the former camp than of the latter, I jumped at the chance to visit LucasArts in San Rafael, Calif., to get an early look at the first PlayStation game of the prequel trilogy. And being familiar with former Star Wars-licensed games, I admit that I went with a certain trepidation. Yes, the Star Wars license produced gems like X-Wing and TIE Fighter for the PC, but it's also responsible for the uninspiring Rebel Assault games and Masters of Teräs Käsi.

Thankfully, it appears that the developers of The Phantom Menace (formerly known simply as Star Wars: Episode I, The Adventure)—the first game to appear on the PlayStation—are as concerned about creating an involving, rewarding game experience as they are about being faithful to the license. The result appears to be a Star Wars game unlike any other.

STAR WARS: EPISODE I

THE PHANTOM MENACE





Ladies and gentlemen, may we present the first PlayStation Phantom Menace screens seen anywhere. Note the sight distance and the many layers of detail on the Theed levels (two center shots above); the translation from the PC version looks surprisingly good.

> "There are certain rules
> when developing a

Every saga has a beginning...

Rise of the Apes

The Phantom Menace is being developed first for the PC, so our first stop was the offices of developer Big Ape Productions. In case the name doesn't ring any bells, Big Ape developed Konami's 16-bit B-movie spoof Zombies Ate My Neighbors, as well as LucasArts' Herc's Adventures for the PlayStation and the Saturn. Both games were roaming adventures viewed from an overhead perspective, and both showed a keen sense of humor and sharp character development.

Although at first this may seem a strange choice for the designers of a Star Wars game, it soon becomes clear LucasArts was specifically in search of developers who would take the license in a new direction. What they wanted was a group that wasn't going to bow to convention. And they got it.

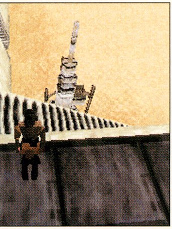
Dean Sharpe, project leader, explains: "There are certain rules you have to break when developing a game for a film. I would normally never have a game where you play multiple characters. Why would you? You want to familiarize yourself with a single character. And in normal video games you start out weak and slowly get better, get new skills, get power-ups, get new weapons. But here, you start out as a bad-ass. You begin the game playing as Obi-Wan, and Qui-Gon [pronounced "Kwai-Gahn," Liam Neeson's character in the film] is there to help you through the level. And when these guys start out in the movie, they're just bad-asses. They start out kicking the crap out of everybody. Bad guys come up and they're like, 'Yeah, whatever, get out of the way.' So you have nowhere to go; you're already a tough guy."

This setup is intriguing, because it forces Big Ape to shift the focus of the game from the standard formula of collecting bigger weapons and nastier power-ups, and instead concentrate almost exclusively on the more essential elements of an adventure game, like puzzles, exploration and character interaction.

Why Jedi Kick Ass

Of course, Big Ape hasn't abandoned convention altogether. Sharpe continues: "We do have some of your normal power-ups. You do get blasters, thermal detonators

Below you can see Qui-Gon in the Tatooine city of Mos Espa, home to junkyards, Pod Races, and a certain overweight gangster named Jabba the Hutt.



you have to break game for a film."

Dean Sharpe

and the like. You also have what's called the Force Push, which basically knocks everything out of your way. But we don't go crazy, because you'll find out quickly that the Lightsaber is pretty much your weapon of choice. From the beginning you can use it to block shots as well as to just hack people down."

To illustrate, Sharpe gave an extremely eloquent demonstration of the power of the Jedi. In one level, Obi-Wan must help Queen Amidala of Naboo elude an invasion force of Battle Droids. Rather than following the Queen's lead, Sharpe instead turns and faces the horde of attackers. The confrontation starts impressively, with Obi-Wan facing 10 or so Droids, deflecting blaster shots and even reflecting some back into the group. But reinforcements soon arrive, bringing the size of the horde up to perhaps 30 or 40. Unfazed, Obi-Wan wades into the group, Lightsaber flashing and whirling almost too fast to follow as the screen fills with explosions and Droid bits. Obi-Wan ends up hacking the group down to about a fifth of their former size before he's forced to retreat, Force Pushing the group backward to keep them off his tail as he and the Queen make a clean getaway.

The moral of the story: Don't mess with a Jedi.

"YOUR WEAPONS...YOU WILL NOT NEED THEM."

But enough about firepower. What about the adventure itself? Well, as mentioned earlier, this is where The Phantom Menace appears to really distinguish itself from previous Star Wars titles.

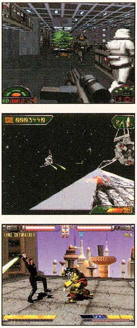
From the first glance, it's obvious this is no Rebel Assault. Like the previously named Big Ape titles, the game is viewed from a top-down, or overhead, perspective, in which the characters roam large polygonal levels populated with friends, enemies, townspeople and plenty of scenery. Although players primarily control Obi-Wan, during parts of the game control will switch to Qui-Gon, Queen Amidala or the Queen's General, Panaka—though Sharpe indicated that the Amidala and Panaka roles are more or less cameos, included to help develop the story.

As you might guess from this, the game does indeed closely follow the story line of the movie. "The only difference," says Sharpe, "would be in the places we've expanded to make them work for gameplay. And, of course, because we're developing the game at the same time as the movie, sometimes things may end up on the cutting room floor that we've already put into the game. It's not that big a deal, because if we were just to follow the movie, well, you could probably get through the game in about two hours. So we obviously had to expand on just about every little thing in the movie. For example, there was one scene in the script where the Queen and Panaka have to take a taxi to the Council Chamber on Coruscant. That whole scene got nixed for the film—at least, I think it did—and we still have it in the game. It's not a huge deal; people aren't going to say, 'Oh my God, that wasn't in the movie,' but there are a lot of things like that."

And what about any bits taken from or constructed to resemble the actual film, like those found in other Star Wars

continued on page 72

PRELUDES TO A PREQUEL



The Phantom Menace won't be the first Star Wars game to make an appearance on the PlayStation. We first saw ports of the PC titles Dark Forces (top, a crawling-frame-rate first-person shooter) and Rebel Assault II (middle, a severely limited FMV-based shooter "on rails"), as well as the silly, but entertaining, console fighter, Masters of Teräs Käsi (bottom). None of these, of course, was developed in sync with a film—a distinction that may prove very important.

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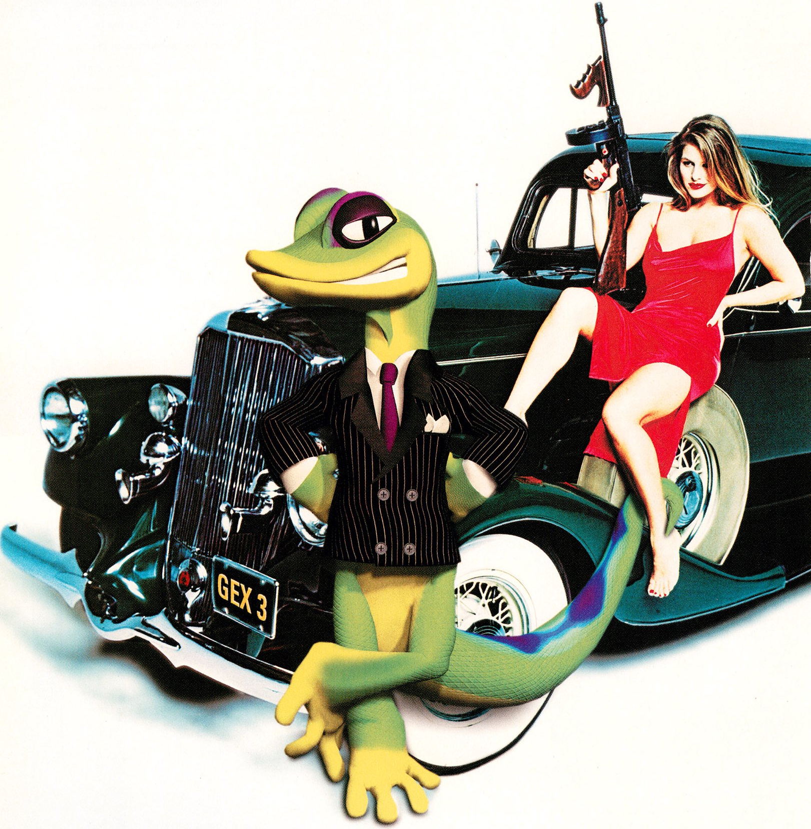

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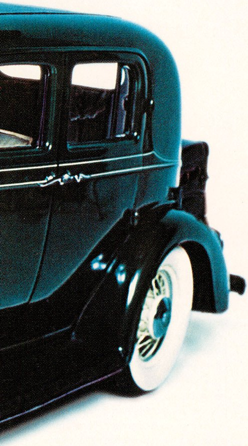

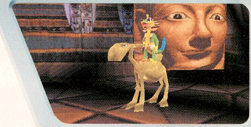

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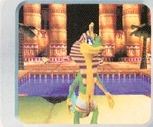

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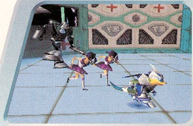

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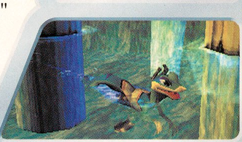

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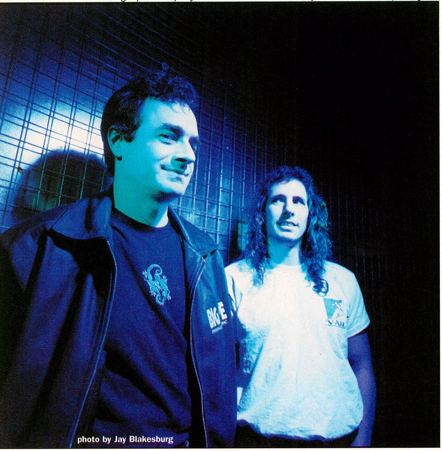
Leading Apes: PC project leaders Mike Ebert (left) and Dean Sharpe (right)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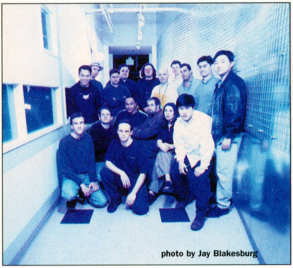
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Apes in Space: the Phantom Menace team at Big Ape

“The general feeling could do it, it

titles? This appears to be another area of departure for Big Ape. “The cinemas at the beginnings of the levels are verbatim from the movie,” says Sharpe, “but we probably only have about three minutes of FMV; we tried to do a lot more in-game cutscenes using the game engine.” This allowed Big Ape more freedom to direct the scenes in a way that’s better integrated into the game, and gave them the ability to write longer and more involved scenes without the limits of time or storage space that come into play with lots of rendered cinemas.

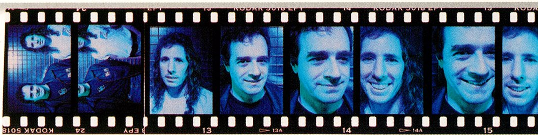
“I Am Fluent in Over Six Million Forms of Communication.”

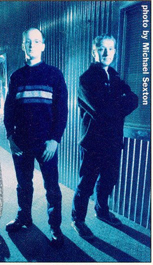
And it’s a good thing, too, because they needed the space for the 4,000-odd lines of spoken dialogue that carry the story of the game. Recorded using some of the actual actors from the film as well as some sound-alikes (“A lot of the time,” chuckles Sharpe, “the sound-alikes sound more like the actors than the actors themselves, because the actors just aren’t into the game as they are into the movie.”), the spoken script will be absolutely essential—this is, after all, an adventure game. Although perhaps 30 to 40 percent of the dialogue will be for the purpose of helping players through the level, the majority of the dialogue is interaction between characters that actually does affect the game.

“How you react to characters will change how the game plays,” says Sharpe. “You won’t necessarily hurt yourself; you’re not going to answer wrong and all of a sudden lose the game. But it will change the game. For example, in one level you need to guide the queen from one side of the area to the other, and at times she’ll ask, ‘Do you want me to stay here, or follow you?’ If you tell her to follow, sometimes you’ll go right into an ambush and she’ll get taken out. Other times, if you leave her where she is, she might get taken out by someone who’s hiding there.”

Of course, actions speak louder than words, and your conduct—and how it’s perceived by the inhabitants of the Star Wars universe—affects the game every bit as much as your conversation. Sharpe offers an example: “The town of Mos Espa has about 150 people who are just going around, doing their business—it’s a whole living town. And if you want to, you can go up to them and hack ’em down, but the town doesn’t like it very much. There will be consequences. And the Jawas *really* don’t like it if you mess with their horses.

“But it also depends on who sees you. It’s very much a living town, and if someone sees you hack down somebody, they’ll tell the rest of the town, the guards will come around, and, well, you probably won’t live. There are also so many people who you need in a level that if you just start hacking them down you probably won’t be able to complete the level anyway.”





Console Jedi: PS conversion team (l. to r.) Pat Costello, John Menzies, Nick Pavis

THE SPOILER MENACE

What's the worst part about working on an Episode I game? "I read the script about a year and a half ago," says a glum Dean Sharpe, "and I saw the movie in an early incarnation, so I pretty much know how it goes." Not every LucasArts employee has suffered the same fate, however; in fact, Nick Pavis tells us he's "managed quite well so far" to avoid ruining the secrets of the films. Even with an in-house resource room filled with everything you ever wanted to know about the film, most employees we talked to have managed to restrict themselves to only the information needed for their projects. But will they have the willpower to wait until the film's street release? "Well..." says Pavis, "we will be seeing the final film before the street release." He grins. "...At a top-secret location."

> was that if anyone
> would be us."
>
> Nick Pavis

Multiple Personalities

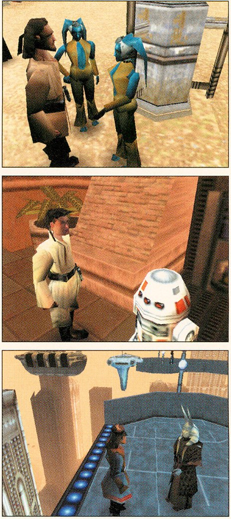
Of course, the game isn't just about slashing droids, talking to townspeople and eluding guards. So just what exactly is the focus of the game? Well...that depends. "It's an equal distribution between just about every type of game you can think of," says Sharpe. "In order to allow you to do everything they do in the movie, we had to have just about everything. But each level has a specific focus; one may be an action level, one may be more of a puzzle level, and one may be very dialogue-oriented, where you're really just talking to people."

So each level serves as sort of a game unto itself. In one level the player will need to travel around a town in search of a shady character from whom to buy some specialized machinery. In another the player needs to find his way through a complex submarine city in order to locate a friend being held prisoner. Yet another sees the player driving a STAP (the small repulsorlift vehicles piloted by Battle Droids) through a dense swamp. But one thing is constant: If you see it in the movie, you'll see it in the game. And then some.

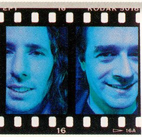
The Saga Continues

But for The Phantom Menace, as with most multiplatform games, the design is only part of the story. So we left Big Ape and headed back to LucasArts to talk to the folks in charge of making The Phantom Menace happen on the PlayStation.

"Big Ape was doing the PC version with the PlayStation in mind," says PlayStation programmer Nick Pavis, "but I think they misjudged what the PlayStation was capable of; as they started putting the PlayStation bits together, it wasn't fitting very well. But John [Menzies, who, along with Pat Costello, makes up the remainder of the PlayStation programming team] and I have quite exceptional experience with what the PlayStation can do and what it should be able to do. So the general feeling was that if anyone could do it, it would be us. So we said we'd give it our best shot."



These scenes from the PC version offer a glimpse of the character design, which is best shown off when the camera cuts close for an in-game cinema. As we've already seen, the PlayStation version is doing an admirable job of reproducing these complex settings.



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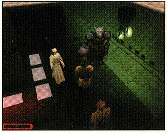
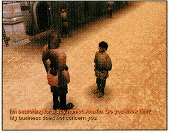
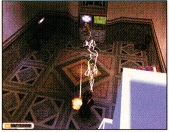
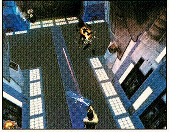
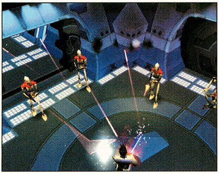


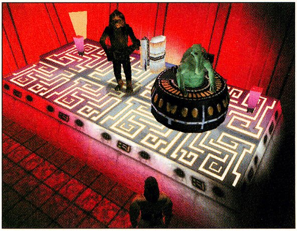


I'm searching for a boy named Anakin. Do you know him?
My business does not concern you.



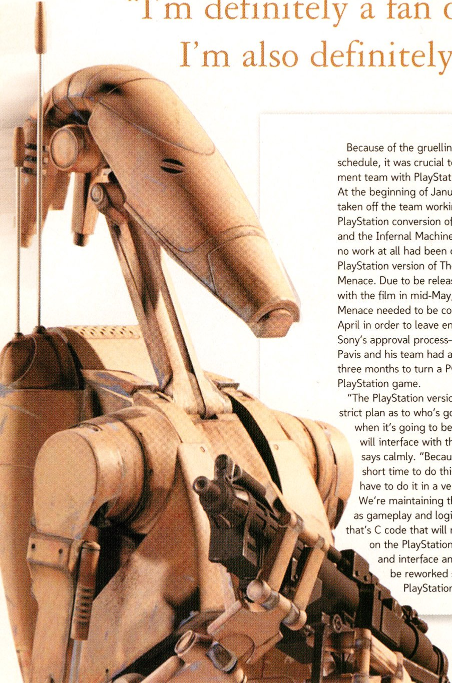






In these additional PC screens, we see interaction between the characters, both friendly (above left center) and hostile (right). Don't worry about ol' Obi-Wan here at right—he can handle about 10 times as many of those pesky Battle Droids.

> "I'm definitely a fan of Star Wars, and of this
> I'm also definitely a fan of this game."
>
> **Nick Pavis**

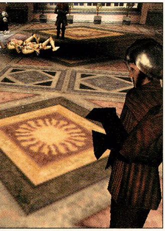


Because of the gruelling development schedule, it was crucial to find a development team with PlayStation experience. At the beginning of January, Pavis was taken off the team working on the PlayStation conversion of Indiana Jones and the Infernal Machine. At that point, no work at all had been done on the PlayStation version of The Phantom Menace. Due to be released concurrently with the film in mid-May, The Phantom Menace needed to be completed by early April in order to leave enough time to pass Sony's approval process—meaning that Pavis and his team had almost exactly three months to turn a PC game into a PlayStation game.

"The PlayStation version involves a very strict plan as to who's going to do what, when it's going to be ready and how it will interface with the PC code," Pavis says calmly. "Because we have such a short time to do this conversion, we have to do it in a very specific way. We're maintaining the PC code as far as gameplay and logic is concerned; that's C code that will run and compile on the PlayStation. But graphics and interface and so on need to be reworked specifically for the PlayStation. So we've taken each individual unit—the rendering of the world, the rendering of the objects, the animating of the objects, the sound—and worked on them to make sure they're identical to how the PC version works. Assuming that we've done everything correctly, then we should be able to slot all the different elements into the PC code."

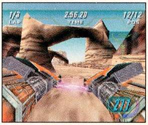
That's the theory, anyway. Of course, you can never quite plan for every contingency, and this project has already had its share of challenges. One of the more prominent of these dealt with the PlayStation's handling of music and sound files. "There are 4,000 lines of voice," says Pavis, "and we wanted to make sure the voice stayed in for the PlayStation version. And we also had to incorporate the iMUSE System [LucasArts' interactive music engine that customizes the game's soundtrack to the level of action onscreen]. This sort of dynamic soundtrack is usually done with MIDI. But we're not doing MIDI, because we have John Williams' orchestra in there. So we wrote a system that allows us to blend CD music from one track to another seamlessly, and loop seamlessly as well. We thought the music was very important. It's a Star Wars game; you have to have John Williams' music blasting out of the speakers!"

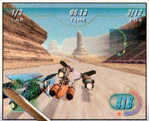
In Mos Espa, the Pod Racing arena has its own band (bottom center). Look familiar? Wonder what other familiar figures might be involved...



movie.

ON THE HORIZON





When LucasArts sat down to decide what games they wanted to create with the Episode I license, the Pod Racing scene (seen first in the "teaser" trailer) was an obvious choice for gamehood. Enter Star Wars: Episode I Racer, under development for the PC and the N64 (seen here) and slated for the PlayStation in "the not-too-distant future." The game will feature 23 tracks on eight different planets, on which 23 distinctive vehicles piloted by all manner of bizarre creatures will race at top speeds exceeding 1,000 mph. That's all we can tell you for now, but expect more info very soon.

A demonstration of this system proved extremely impressive; apparently Pavis and company flagged segments of the music tracks so that when a new track needs to be loaded the music can switch smoothly at a sensible transition point, avoiding the more abrupt cuts that characterized LucasArts' first iMUSE titles. The result—in the case of this particular demonstration, at least—was an almost imperceptible transition from one track to another.

The Deadline Menace

With such a short time allotted for product development, it's not out of order to wonder whether the final PlayStation version could suffer from a rush job. Pavis concedes that it's a legitimate concern, but explains he's doing everything in his power to ensure the final product will be a solid one. One of the first things the team did was to prioritize the game elements, setting their production schedule so that the most important features were completed first. That way, if the time constraints proved too much for the project, only nonessentials would be left out.

"We can't miss the movie release," Pavis explains. "We're definitely going to have something by that time, and we're doing our best to ensure it's as much as can be done. But there may be a few things that we just don't have time to put in, little things. For example, there are two different animations that happen when a Battle Droid explodes in the PC version; perhaps we'll just use one. It means that there may be just a few things that you're not going to really notice. We've chosen carefully what needs to be done such that it's all about the game experience, and we have all the components there.

"The worst is definitely behind us, because we have the worlds up and running. Getting these levels to the stage where they're running at a good framerate, that was major. And getting every single model in and running at framerate, running every animation, running every sound, that was quite a hurdle as well. We've solved the memory issue by breaking the levels up into smaller bits. We've done the music, which I thought was quite important. That's all behind us. The pressure work is done."

Phantom Fanatics

What's most exciting about this project is that The Phantom Menace, the game, had been under development by people for whom Star Wars is an inseparable part of their culture. Like many of us, these folks have been Star Wars fans from elementary school or before. Most can't remember a time when they didn't know what Star Wars was. And now they're helping contribute to a new generation of fans. They're helping to build a new empire.

"I look at clips from this movie," says Pavis, "and I realize it's got that thing that the original Star Wars had. It puts you in this world that's fun to spend time in. I'm definitely a fan of Star Wars, and of this movie.

"I'm also definitely a fan of this game. The first week we spent on this game, we just loaded up the PC game and played it for a week straight just to find out what it was all about. And I found it fun to play. I think that counts for a lot." Considering the gruelling schedule they're putting this guy through, we think so, too.

Any further doubts were quashed when Pavis brought up the teaser trailer as a demonstration of the game's video compression. After it ended and we all caught our breaths, he smiled. "Gets me every time."

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Dead or Alive Feature
1997 OPM Editors' Awards

Demo Disc includes: playables: NCAA GameBreaker 98, Tomb Raider II, Command & Conquer: Red Alert, Crime Killer non-playables: Pitfall 3D, Resident Evil 2, Vigilante 8, Monster Rancher

☐

Issue #6– $7.99

March 1998

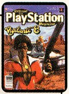
Demo Disc Only!

playables: Bloody Roar, Monster Rancher, Shipwreckers non-playables: Alundra, NBA Shoot Out 98, Saga Frontier, Mega Man Neo

☐

Issue #7– $10

April 1998



10 Overlooked PS Picks
Resident Evil 2 Strategy

Demo Disc includes: playables: Hot Shots Golf, Pitfall 3D, WCW Nitro, ONE non-playables: Blasto, The Granstream Saga

☐

Issue #8– $10

May 1998

Psybadek Feature
Tekken 3 Strategy

Demo Disc includes: playables: Einhänder, Gex: Enter the Gecko, Klonoa non-playables: Dead or Alive, Gran Turismo

☐

Issue #9– $10

June 1998

Metal Gear Solid Preview
Gran Turismo Review

Demo Disc includes: playables: Cardinal SYN, Vigilante 8, Forsaken, N2O, TOCA, Dead or Alive. non-playables: Tomba, Jersey Devil

☐

Issue #10– $7.99

July 1998

Demo Disc Only!

playables: Gran Turismo, Tomba!, The Granstream Saga, Jersey Devil, NBA Shoot Out, Blasto, Speed Racer non-playables: NFL Xtreme, MLB 99, Tekken 3

☐

Issue #11– $15

August 1998

Metal Gear Solid
Vigilante 8 Strategy

Demo Disc includes: playables: Tekken 3, Turbo Prop Racing non-playables: Duke Nukem: Time to Kill, Lunar: Silver Star Story, Ninja: Shadow of Darkness, Metal Gear Solid

☐

Issue #12– $10

September 1998

PlayStation's Birthday
Elemental Gearbolt Strategy

Demo Disc includes: playables: Spyro the Dragon, Duke Nukem: Time to Kill, WWF War Zone, The Unholy War, S.C.A.R.S. non-playables: Metal Gear Solid, Rival Schools, Test Drive 5

☐

Volume 2– $10
Issue 1

October 1998

Spyro the Dragon Strategy

Demo Disc includes: playables: Metal Gear Solid, Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver, Test Drive 5, Devil Dice, Brunswick Bowling, Ninja, NFL Xtreme, Cool Boarders 3 non-playables: Parasite Eve, Rival Schools, NFL GameDay 99

☐

Volume 2– $15
Issue 2

November 1998

Tomb Raider III Metal Gear Solid Strategy

Demo Disc includes: playables: MediEvil, WarGames: Defcon 1, G. Darius, Dragon Seeds, Colony Wars: Vengeance, Future Cop L.A.P.D., non-playables: Crash Bandicoot: WARPED, Abe's Exoddus, Brave Fencer Musashi, Rugrats, T'ai Fu, Tenchu, You Don't Know Jack

☐

Volume 2– $10
Issue 3

December 1998

Metal Gear Solid
Crash Bandicoot: WARPED Strategy

Demo Disc includes: playables: Tomb Raider III, Crash Bandicoot: WARPED, Bomberman World, A Bug's Life, Running Wild, Invasion From Beyond, Kagero: Deception II, Metal Gear Solid, Gran Turismo, non-playables: Silent Hill, Knockout Kings, Big Air

☐

Volume 2– $10
Issue 4

January 1999

Gex Deep Cover Gecko
Tomb Raider III Strategy

Demo Disc includes: playables: Silent Hill, Moto Racer 2, Brave Fencer Musashi, Apocalypse, T'ai Fu non-playables: Rugrats, Test Drive: Off-Road 2

☐

Volume 2– $10
Issue 6

March 1999

PlayStation Dictionary
Syphon Filter Strategy

Demo Disc includes: playables: Syphon Filter, Bust A Groove, Shadow Madness, Fisherman's Bait, Akuji the Heartless, No One Can Stop Mr. Domino, Street Sk8er non-playables: NCAA Final Four '99, Guardian's Crusade

☐

Volume 2– $10
Issue 7

March 1999

The Year of the RPG
Silent Hill Strategy

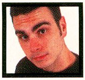
Demo Disc includes: playables: R4: Ridge Racer Type 4, WCW/nWo Thunder, Rollcage, Warzone 2100, Rugrats: Search for Reptar non-playables: Legend of Legaia

☐

Reviews

The final word—official and unbiased

Meet the Critics



Kraig Kujawa
Editor-in-Chief

After playing a mock-up of Gran Turismo on the next PlayStation (or whatever they're gonna call it), everything else just seems insignificant. It's too bad the flu sent Kraig crashing back to reality.

Favorite Genres: Sports, Strategy
Current Favorites: Triple Play 2000
Can't Wait For: Omega Boost, Gran Turismo 2, Tomba! 2, Dino Crisis

Joe Rybicki
Deputy Editor

Having managed to so far elude the superflu, Joe spent this month gloating that he knew more than anyone else about *The Phantom Menace*. But unlike certain colleagues, he's not trying to spoil it for anyone.

Favorite Genres: Adventure, RPG, Puzzle
Current Favorites: Driver, Hydro Thunder (arcade), and my new C64!
Can't Wait For: PlayStation 2. Duh.

Wataru Maruyama
West Coast Editor

Wat is normally a healthy lad, but this year's flu strain had him out for the count. Perhaps the superflu is right around the corner, along with Y2K—or perhaps Wat is just out of shape.

Favorite Genres: Fighting, Racing, Adventure
Current Favorites: Silent Hill, R4, Point Blank 2
Can't Wait For: FFVIII, the games I talk about in the review intro

Mark MacDonald
Associate Editor

With the Tokyo Game Show, Star Wars movie and game, then E3 and a new PlayStation machine around the corner, Mark just realized this month that his next moment of free time will probably be sometime in August 2001.

Favorite Genres: Action, Adventure, RPG
Current Favorites: Final Fantasy VIII, R4, PocketStation everything, green peppers
Can't Wait For: Jade Cocoon, Dino Crisis

In the Year 2000

by Wataru Maruyama

I have to admit that all the talk about the "next generation" PlayStation got my head stuck in the clouds. I thought about what games would come out for it and what I'd like to see on it; but the funny thing is, it got me thinking about what I'd still like to see on my trusty PlayStation I've got in front of me. So, here is my wish list of titles that I feel would kick ass on the 32-bit workhorse:

Bionic Commando (Capcom) – Come on, Capcom! Will we ever see a follow up to this awesome title? I'd like to see it handled in sort of a 2.5D deal like Klonoa. The PlayStation is great at handling stuff like that. I would have put Strider on this list, but it looks like the forces of all that's good in the world have already convinced you of that title's worthiness.

A New Capcom Collection (Capcom) – This would include Black Tiger, Punisher, Aliens vs. Predator and the original Final Fight. Another set of classics that would keep me warm at night.

Street Fighter EX2, Star Gladiator 2 (Capcom) – They've been on the tentative list for sooo long. This Christmas season is lacking in fighters, making it an ideal time for these two overlooked arcade gems.

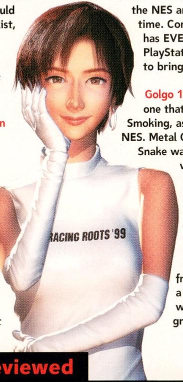
Bushido Blade 3 (Square Soft) – Who could resist another go at some sword-slashing action? Not me.

Aerobiz (Koei) – Who would have thought a sim game about running airlines could be so addictive? I'd even put aside my Civilization II...at least for a little while.

River City Ransom (American Technos) – One of the greatest games of all time. It was basically Final Fight RPG for the NES and was way ahead of its time. Come to think of it, no game has EVER come close. The PlayStation could be the system to bring it back.

Golgo 13 (Vic Tokai) – Another one that was ahead of its time. Smoking, assassination and sex on the NES. Metal Gear Solid is close, but Snake was a pussycat compared with the iron-willed Duke Togo. Golgo would be a great addition to the growing list of mature PlayStation titles.

Triple Play 2001 (EA) – They finally fixed their frame-rate problem! It'd be a crime if they moved on without building on this great achievement.



Games Reviewed

Army Men 3D	87	NFS: High Stakes	82
Big Air	88	Point Blank 2	83
Eliminator	89	R4: Ridge Racer Type 4	80
Gex 3	79	Shanghai: True Valor	89
Hello Kitty	88	T.R.A.G.	85
Monster Seed	86	Triple Play 2000	84

Box Score

It doesn't get much more simple yet effective than *OPM*'s five-disc rating system. Very few games are lucky enough to get our golden five-disc salute, but if one does, be sure to pick it up!

●○○○○ We'd rather watch old Designing Women reruns than play this game.

●●○○○ Below average. There are fundamental flaws with this game; get something better.

●●●○○ A good title. It's a fun game with some flaws that can be overlooked.

●●●●○ Definitely a topnotch game. Very good and well worth your time.

●●●●● Fabulous! These are the games that really make you proud to own a PlayStation.

1 Player

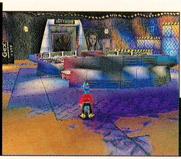
Memory Card 1~6 blocks

Analog Control Compatible

Vibration Function Compatible

Developer	Crystal D.
Publisher	Eidos
Genre	Action

Gex: Deep Cover Gecko



Apparently, geckos like to explore, not take action

This game scored major points with me a few hours into gameplay when I entered the Ghost Town level and the game displayed the mission objectives, one of which was "Visit the world's largest mound of poop." And so I did—I walked right up to the steaming pile of excrement, hopped right on top of it, and picked up some power-ups. If I saw that in any other game, I would probably be shocked, but when it comes to the Gex series, such an event is right up the alley of these games. Any game that can make me laugh at something other than horrible gameplay deserves at least some credit, right off the bat.

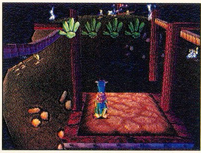
Most of Gex takes places in various themed worlds, be it a Christmas-style wonderland, a pirate ship, a desert island or a mansion (there's a ton of levels). Most of the humor is derived from some obvious as well as subtle pop-culture gags placed throughout the environment, and less effectively through Gex's wisecracks. It gives the game a flavor all its own—which is good, because Gex: Deep Cover Gecko can't stand among topnotch platformers, although it is an above-average one.

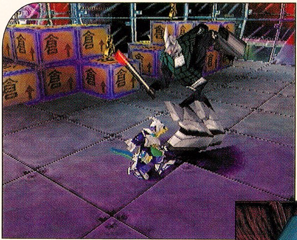
Part of the problem with Gex is that it relies too much on exploration, and there's not enough combat with enemies. Most of the fighting involves running right up to one and hitting the tail-whack button—yawn. Thankfully, the environments are interesting enough to make you want to forge on to see what the next one looks like.

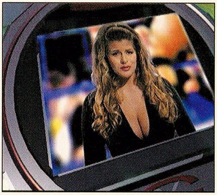
Unfortunately, the game has many of the same technical problems that plague most 3D platformers. There are plenty of camera glitches that make it hard to maneuver around tight spots in addition to some polygonal clipping that adds some annoyances to navigation. None of the problems are by any means fatal, but they are noticeable, and they will piss you off here and there.

If you want a 3D platformer, this is one of the better ones. Just be prepared to spend most of your time looking for things, instead of having fun killing them.

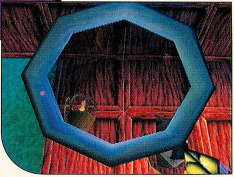
—Kraig Kujawa

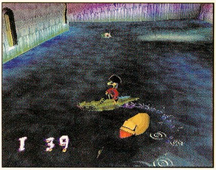






Remember that mound of poop I was talking about earlier (above)? Here's the damsel in distress you must save (left).





On the Sherlock Holmes level, you must use your magnifying glass to find places where you can play minigames (above). The crocodile is just one of many animals and vehicles you can ride (left).

Box Score

Pros
- Tons of levels
- Lots of secrets
- Nice graphics

Cons
- Enemy combat is pretty shallow
- Gex's comments get repetitive
- Plenty of camera problems

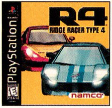
"Any game that can make me laugh at something other than horrible gameplay deserves at least some credit."

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

● ● ● ◐ ○

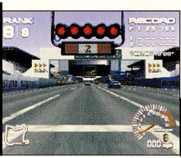
Rating

Developer	Namco
Publisher	Namco
Genre	Racing



1 or 2 Players
Memory Card 1 block
Analog Controller Compatible
Vibration Function Compatible

R4: Ridge Racer Type 4



A new racing standard from the wizards at Namco

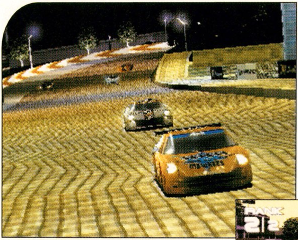
As one of the few initial launch titles for the PlayStation, the original Ridge Racer stood out as both a technical feat and a great-playing game. Even with that first game for the system, Namco managed to squeeze more power out of the PlayStation than any other developer and set a standard against which other racing games would be judged. Now, almost four years and countless imitations later, Namco continues that same dominance with their fourth Ridge Racing game, R4.

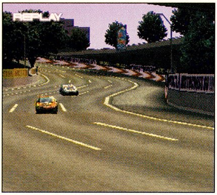
Graphics sure to please

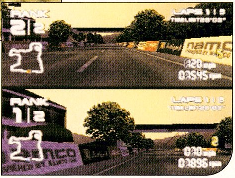
If you thought Gran Turismo was the best-looking PlayStation racing game, you would have been right—until now. With tons of scenery lining the tracks, no pop-up on the horizon, a smooth, constant 30 fps frame-rate, and none of the little white lines and other graphical glitches that plagued earlier Ridge Racer games, R4 is a technical marvel. But more than that, the game is drop-dead gorgeous. From the huge office buildings and bridges of the city courses to smooth rolling hills and cottages in the countryside, R4 is visually exhilarating, making you feel that you're actually behind the wheel better than any other PS racer so far. Incredible lighting effects, like a sunset illuminating the road and other cars as well as streaking taillights, help lend the game a feeling of speed and style like no other. This game has been polished down to the smallest details.

So it looks great, but how does it play?

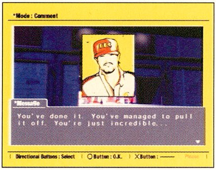
Like previous games in the series, R4 features two very different styles of cars for you to control—grip and drift. Grip cars hug the road and force you to wind your way carefully through turns, while drift vehicles swerve and skid sideways, letting you corner sharply at top speeds. Unlike the earlier games, however, it's not nearly as difficult to control your car and outrun the computer opponents. In previous Ridge Racers, powerslides were difficult to execute properly, and harsh penalties for bumping the side of the track or other cars (which were controlled by an almost flawless AI at later levels) made the courses hard for players







The split-screen two-player mode (up to four players using the link cable) is the best new addition to R4.

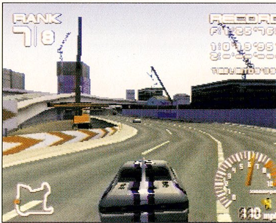


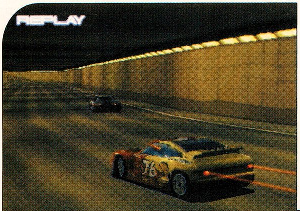
*Mode : Comment

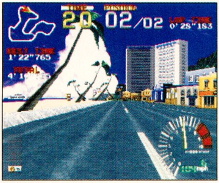
*Message

You've done it. You've managed to pull it off. You're just incredible...

Directional Buttons : Select | ○Button : O.K. | ✕Button : ——







Included with R4 is an extra bonus CD containing movies of past Namco PlayStation releases (and some footage of the upcoming Ace Combat 3), as well as the entire playable Ridge Racer game and a new Turbo version (above), which runs at an incredible 60 frames a second!

NAMCO MUSEUM
NAMCO

RANK
2/8
RECORD

to finish, let alone master. This difficulty level and tough competition kept the player racing even though there were only a couple of different tracks to choose from. R4 eases up on this philosophy with both good and bad results. The good news is, there are now more totally unique courses than ever before (four, with two variations each), and powerslides are easy enough to perform that almost anyone can pull them off (although mastering them is still another story). Novice players will also appreciate the fact that they can make a few mistakes in each race and still finish well enough to go on to the next.

The bad news is that this ultimately makes for a much easier, and shorter, game overall. After a few days spent getting used to the controls and courses, it isn't very tough to beat the computer opponents even on the expert level Grand Prix circuit. R4 tries to keep your interest with a huge number of different and secret cars you can earn (321 in all), but that payoff just isn't enough to motivate real long-term replay. Faster computer cars to keep the challenge level high as the player becomes experienced would have worked far better.

Get by with a little help from your friends

What R4 does have that somewhat makes up for this loss in replay value is a split-screen two-player mode. Playing against a friend is always more fun than racing with faceless computer drones, and as the first RR game to feature a same-screen versus mode, R4 does an excellent job. The graphic details remains high, and best of all the frame-rate doesn't seem to suffer one bit. The few of you who can use a link cable will also be happy to know that it is supported in R4, allowing up to four people to play at once.

Worth the ride

At its heart, R4 is still pure Ridge Racer—solid controls, unbelievable graphics and fast-paced arcade-style gameplay. Although softening the difficulty and learning curve may have hurt its long-term value (especially for more experienced players), this is still one wild ride that shouldn't be missed by racing fans—and their friends.

—Mark MacDonald

JogPros and JogCons

Outside of their legacy for making great PlayStation games, Namco has also built a reputation as the makers of some of the finest peripherals available for the platform; their NegCon and GunCon are still the best racing and shooting controllers on the market.

Now gamers have the option of buying Namco's latest creation with R4, the JogCon. The JogCon is basically a standard controller with a large rotating disc in the middle that provides realistic feedback and resistance, like an actual car steering wheel. A neat trick, but even after you adjust to using it, the JogCon never feels as smooth or as natural as its older brother, the NegCon. My advice is to buy the JogCon package only if you don't have a NegCon and do have the extra money to spend. It's a fun little diversion, but not useful enough that you can't race without it.

Box Score

Pros

- More tracks and cars than ever before
- Incredible graphics
- Split-screen multiplayer support

Cons

- Computer opponents are too easy
- Earning all the different cars is more trouble than it's worth

"At its heart, R4 is still pure Ridge Racer—solid controls, unbelievable graphics and fast-paced arcade-style gameplay."

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

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Rating

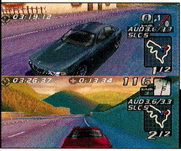
PlayStation
Need for Speed

1 or 2 Players
Memory Card 1 block
Analog Control Compatible
Vibration Function Compatible

Developer	Electronic Arts
Publisher	Electronic Arts
Genre	Racing

NFS: High Stakes

EA packs even more into their premier racer



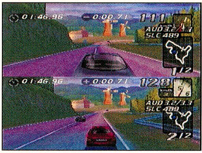
PlayStation

If there's one thing I've learned in the past few years, it's that as long as new cars keep rolling out every year, there will be a new Need For Speed game to follow. Need For Speed III was a great racing game, and I really didn't think EA could possibly find more things to pack into a sequel, but indeed they have—and Need For Speed: High Stakes came out pretty damn well.

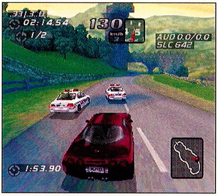
The big improvements in this year's sequel are the various risk/reward elements that include the risk of losing your car in a pink slip (if you beat your friend, you get his car saved onto your memory card!) and the necessity of repairing car damage. I like both of these new features, as they force me to drive honest when I'm playing in those new modes. Honest? Well, one of the things I would always do the minute I'd boot up a new NFS game is start ramming my expensive car into oncoming traffic. Now, the game makes me pay for my sick fetishes. But don't fret too much if you're like me—there's plenty of plain-vanilla test-driving modes that let you turn the interstate into a death trap without any worries.

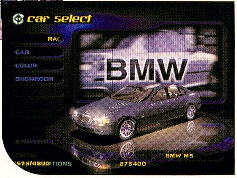
NFS also has a ton of cool new tournaments that segregate car types. One might be a Corvette-only race, while another might only let you race upgraded BMWs. Yes, upgrades. Not satisfied with the obscene horsepower in your new supercar? Well, now you can make it even more obscene, provided you have enough cash winnings to add considerably more pep to your pickup. But be careful—make your car too fast and the highly detailed tracks become nothing but a passing blur.

The only minor problem with Need For Speed: High Stakes is the jittery frame-rate during the game's Hot Pursuit Mode (where cops madly chase you around). The rest of the game is very smooth, but when it comes to this play mode, there are some problems here and there. Still, it's a really minor flaw in the grand scope of things, and in no way should deter you from picking up this fun and well-rounded game. *—Kraig Kujawa*



The Hot Pursuit Mode pits you against a pack of very irritated cops (left).





Go to different dealerships and find a car that fits your style and pocketbook (above).

Box Score

Pros

- Tons of modes
- Excellent gameplay
- Lots of cars

Cons

- Jittery frame-rate in Hot Pursuit Mode

"As long as new cars keep rolling out every year, there will be a new Need For Speed game to follow."

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

● ● ● ● ◐

Rating

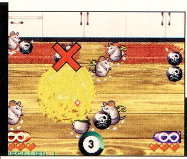
Developer	Namco
Publisher	Namco
Genre	Action

namco
Point Blank 2
GunCon

1 or 2 Players

Memory Card 1 block

Point Blank 2



PlayStation

Mindless gun fun for you and your friends

Ask any 10-year-old, hunting enthusiast or psychotic killer and they'll all agree: Shooting things is fun. That's the overall idea behind the Point Blank series—quick thinking, fast reflexes and simple fun. This isn't a game that will challenge your problem-solving skills or make you think differently about the world. Point Blank 2 is basically just a huge collection of various shooting-gallery minigames, but it's packed with enough ingenuity, humor and variety to make it worthwhile for any GunCon owner.

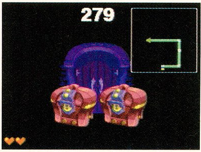
The one major complaint most people have with gun games is they never seem to last. Once you know exactly where and when every ski-masked villain or duck is going to pop out, it's just not challenging anymore. Point Blank 2 avoids this problem with the sheer number of different games it has (more than 70 in all) and by including random elements in almost all of them.

Even more variety can be found in the various game modes in PB2. With Practice, Arcade, Endurance, Theme Park and three different versus modes (Tournament, Team Battle and Turf War), plus four difficulty settings, you won't be getting tired of this game anytime soon. Its simple theme and ability to handle up to eight players (not all at once, of course—two at a time) also make Point Blank 2 a perfect party game, even for beginners and non-gamers.

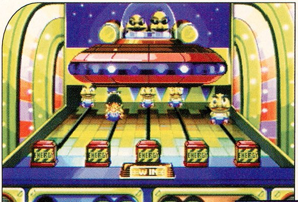
So what problems does PB2 have? The way the game scores in multiplayer could be balanced better, and a few of PB2's 70 games could be improved—there are some unfair tricks and cheats to some of them that can spoil a multiplayer game.

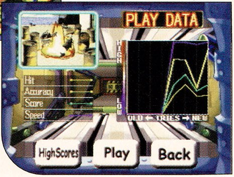
Whether or not you'll like Point Blank 2 comes down to a simple question of what you're looking for in a light-gun game. If you're looking for impressive graphics, innovative gameplay or a deep, serious game, look elsewhere; if you just want to have fun and a laugh or two shootin' stuff, look for Point Blank 2.

—Mark MacDonald



For an added twist to the one-player game, Point Blank 2 includes the new Theme Park Mode. You have to complete four challenges (the haunted house maze is pictured above) and survive numerous minigames to gather clues and eventually save the kidnapped princess.





The Practice Mode introduces new players to the basic rules of the different games and even charts their progress as they improve.

BAR
WELC
HIT!
1
HIT!
PRACTICE

Box Score

Pros

- Simple and addictive
- Two-player game almost anyone can enjoy
- Large variety of different games, play modes, and options

Cons

- Really need two GunCons to fully enjoy it
- Many of the games are basically the same

> "If you just want to have fun and a laugh or two shootin' stuff, check out Point Blank 2."

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

● ● ● ◐ ○

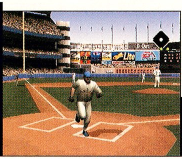
Rating

Developer EA Sports
Publisher Electronic Arts
Genre Sports

PlayStation
TRIPLE PLAY 2000
EA SPORTS

1 or 2 Players
Memory Card 6~12 blocks
Analog Control Compatible

Triple Play 2000



EA finally hits a grand slam

I have always said that if EA could ever find a way to improve the frame-rate and game speed in Triple Play, they would have an excellent PlayStation baseball game on their hands. Lo and behold, after years of messing around, they've finally done just that.

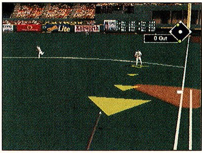
Triple Play 2000 might come as a shock to those who are used to the previous clunky versions of the series. The game has been redesigned with simplicity in mind, making gaudy menus and complex controls a thing of the past. The game is much more intuitive now, at the expense of very little. The only item I wish they hadn't removed are the useful team categorical rankings (offense, defense, overall) at the team selection screen. But I suppose if you have a favorite team, those don't matter too much anyway.

What matters most, however, is the tremendously improved gameplay. Everything happens at a feverish pace (relative to baseball) in Triple Play, but the beauty of it is that the game's realism isn't harmed in the process. For example, the batting is very fun and has an arcade feel to it, but is still quite precise and realistic if you play on a higher difficulty level. Once the ball is out of the batter's box, the frame-rate is excellent as you move your players around to make a play.

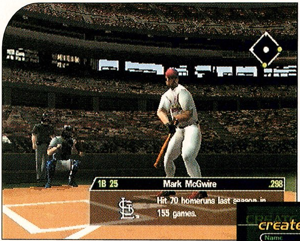
One particular thing that struck me is Triple Play's mastery of the "TV-style presentation." The way the cameras track a ball as it's launched out of the park or simply follow a bloop single into the outfield is the best I've seen in any baseball game. It gives TP2000 a flair for the dramatic, something that might be a little overemphasized when coupled with the Fox-esque light trails that shine behind every ball that's hit or thrown.

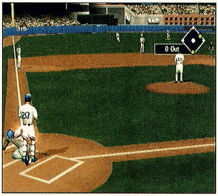
There aren't many weaknesses at all in Triple Play 2000—the atmosphere, graphics and gameplay are the best I've seen in a PlayStation baseball game. And you can even pick it up right on Opening Day.

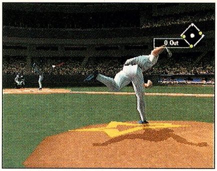
—Kraig Kujawa

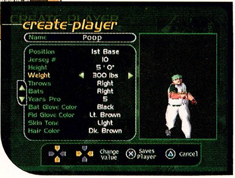


Various fielding aides pop up to help you quickly chase down those hard-hit balls (above).


1B 25 Mark McGwire .298
Hit 70 homeruns last season in 155 games.






create-player
Name Poop
Position 1st Base
Jersey # 10
Height 5 ' 0"
Weight 300 lbs
Throws Right
Bats Right
Years Pro 5
Bat Glove Color Black
Fld Glove Color Lt. Brown
Skin Tone Light
Hair Color Dk. Brown

The scouts said our five-foot, 300 lb 1st baseman would never make the big leagues, but he defied the naysayers to make it into the pros (above).

Box Score

Pros
- Great game pace
- Fast frame-rate
- Lots of options and features
- Excellent atmosphere

Cons
- The different Home Run Derby is bizarre
- Light trails should be able to be turned off

"Triple Play 2000 might come as a shock to those who are used to the previous clunky versions of the series."

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine
● ● ● ● ◐
Rating

Developer	Sunsoft
Publisher	Sunsoft
Genre	Adventure

PlayStation
T.R.A.G.
Mission of Mercy

1 Player
Memory Card 1 block
Analog Control Compatible
Vibration Function Compatible

T.R.A.G.

T.he R.eally A.verage G.ame

Resident Evil meets sci-fi *Die Hard*—if you had to sum up T.R.A.G. in 10 words or less, that would just about cover it. Unfortunately, comparing it with that classic Capcom horror title and excellent action movie might give you unrealistic expectations; T.R.A.G. (Tactical Rescue Assault Group, in case you were wondering) isn't a terrible game, it's just terribly average.

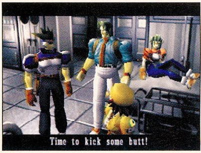
The year is 2046, and terrorists have taken over the hi-rise headquarters of Machinery Gear, Inc., a major player in aerospace and weapons development. You start the game as two SWAT team members who sneak into the building to rescue hostages and find out what the terrorists are after. Told through real-time and prerendered cutscenes, T.R.A.G.'s story and setting are interesting, but it's not enough to really suck the player in. Some awkward dialogue ("People who lie really get up my nose.") and uneven voice-acting doesn't help matters.

Gameplay is mostly standard adventure-game fare: You battle through enemies, find items and solve puzzles to progress. One idea T.R.A.G. adds to the mix is allowing the player to switch between four characters at any time, each with different weapons and varying speed and power. Some parts of the game even have you split into two separate teams, exploring different sections of the building at the same time. An interesting idea, but T.R.A.G. never really develops it, and only rarely does it matter which character you are playing with.

Another area that could have used more attention is T.R.A.G.'s controls. Despite a good number of different moves, with special attacks, combos, backflips and more, turning and maneuvering precisely in T.R.A.G. is difficult. Most of the enemies are ridiculously easy to kill anyway, but when trying to fight bosses and dodge some of the booby traps you really start to wish the controls had been handled better.

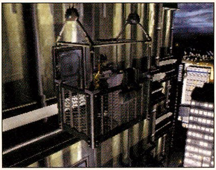
In the end, it's hard to really love or hate T.R.A.G; it meets all of my minimum expectations but rarely exceeds any.

—Mark MacDonald



Like Resident Evil, T.R.A.G.'s story is told through both real-time and prerendered cutscenes. Unfortunately also like Resident Evil, the voice-acting is often laughable.

ALEX
AP
9
229



As you explore the Togusa office building you'll need to avoid the building's automated security forces as well as the invading terrorists.

Box Score

Pros

- Interesting premise
- Four playable characters to switch between
- Some good puzzles

Cons

- Controls need improvement
- Dialogue and voice-acting doesn't let you take the game seriously
- Average graphics with occasional slowdown

"In the end it's really hard to love or hate T.R.A.G; it meets all of my minimum expectations but rarely exceeds any."

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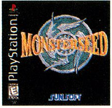
Rating

Developer	Sunsoft
Publisher	Sunsoft
Genre	RPG



1 Player
Memory Card 1 block

Monster Seed

No need to catch your monster—just hatch 'em

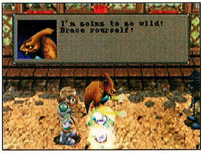
There's nothing quite like the tried-and-true story of a young man raising assorted monsters in order to save his land from evil. It reminds me of my youth, when I would gather local insects and battle them against other bugs. Of course I wasn't saving any land, and perhaps the only evil was my meddling with the littlest of God's creatures, but you get my drift.

As with most monster raising games, you'll go through a great deal of trial and error with your creatures and spend a considerable amount of time building them up before you can advance. This is usually half the fun of this genre, but the pacing and odd dialogue in Monster Seed make for a grueling and mind-numbing experience. I really can't say enough about the awful dialogue in this game. It usually make no sense at all and oftentimes contradicts what the character or creature had said earlier. It's somewhat excusable for a strict monster raising title, but you can imagine how much it hurts an RPG. The music, though, is good enough that it doesn't annoy you—except during very long monster encounters, which will have you reaching for the volume nob.

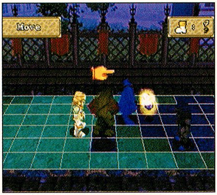
On the bright side, hatching the eggs is quite fun, and the ability to mix solutions to influence the strengths of the final product is pretty cool. The option to buy pre-hatched monsters is also very helpful since they'll be your most powerful fighters until your newer hatchlings gain more experience. The diversity of monsters is great—they can even have different characteristics within the same species. You'll rapidly learn which personality types work best for your team, so you can quickly sell monsters that didn't "come out right."

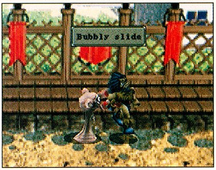
Monster-raising is such a specialized genre that the only comparable titles are Monster Rancher and Dragonseeds. MS blows away Dragonseeds but doesn't come close to Monster Rancher. It's not even in the ballpark when compared with strict RPGs like Final Fantasy VII or Legaia. This is a game for fans of monster raising only.

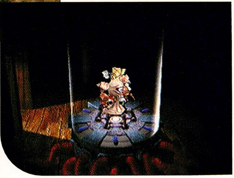
—***Wataru Maruyama***


I'm going to go wild! Brace yourself!

Most of your monsters can perform magic attacks...when they feel like it. And that's only when they want to attack at all. Try to dump monsters with selfish personalities.







The monster designs range from interesting to just plain ugly. Oh Pikachu, where are you, my friend?

Box Score

Pros
- Not bad for monster raising fans
- Lots of creatures
- A long game

Cons
- Unsatisfying as a hybrid RPG
- Horrible dialogue
- Barebones story
- Average character designs

"It blows away Dragonseeds but doesn't come close to Monster Rancher."

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

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Rating

PlayStation
ARMY MEN 3D
REAL COMBAT. PLASTIC MEN.
3DO

1 or 2 Players

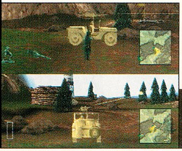
Memory Card 1 block

Analog Control Compatible

Vibration Function Compatible

Developer	3DO
Publisher	3DO
Genre	Action

Army Men 3D



PlayStation

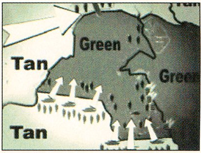
It's fun to play war!

Like many other PlayStation adaptations of PC titles, Army Men 3D is a seriously simplified action-game version of a strategy-oriented title. This being the case, and having seen the game in its early stages, I have to admit I wasn't expecting a whole lot. I'm happy to report that Army Men 3D left me pleasantly surprised.

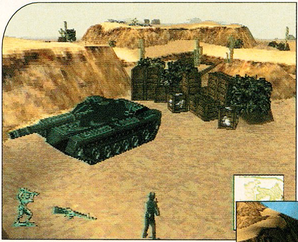
In bringing the game to the console market, 3DO severely narrowed the focus of the original Army Men, shifting it from large-scale strategy to single-unit mission-based play. Thankfully, in doing so they didn't lose sight of the original goal: to remind us why we enjoyed "playing war" when we were kids. Your character (with the mind-bogglingly generic name of "Sarge") is in most missions a lone soldier struggling against tremendous odds. And these aren't throwaway Rambo enemies; these guys are equipped with the same weapons you are, and can put an end to your little crusade real quick. This forces you to think and move strategically, rolling out of cover to squeeze off a few shots and then diving for the nearest foxhole. It's surprisingly entertaining. Also amusing is the ability to drive different vehicles, including a giant tank in which you can go one-on-one against an enemy tank, Combat-style.

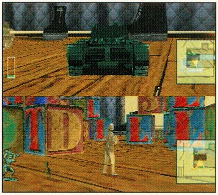
All this is driven by a fairly solid engine. Although the frame-rate can be a bit shaky when a lot of enemies are on screen (and in two-player mode the game is almost unplayable), Army Men generally runs at a surprising 60 frames per second.

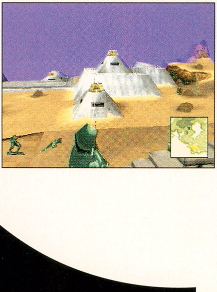
Unfortunately, the game as a whole feels as if it were rushed out the door—or perhaps thrown from a drop plane without a 'chute. Spotty controls, whacked camera angles, flat or nonexistent sound effects, lots of serious pop-up and a general graphical blandness give the game an unfinished feel. That's too bad, because a little extra effort spent on polishing the product could have upgraded it from a good rental choice to a good purchase choice. Nevertheless, it's still worth a look. *—Joe Rybicki*



The game begins with an entertaining spoof of old propaganda films (above), keeping the citizens up to date on the whereabouts of the evil Tan empire.







Not only can you take control of one of four different vehicles, but you can also control the vehicle's weaponry (above), which is perfect for traveling a long distance quickly—and in one piece.

Box Score

Pros

- The game retains a lot of strategic elements
- Surprisingly fast engine
- Solid challenge
- Tank battles!

Cons

- Spotty controls
- Some bad camera angles
- Lots of pop-up and other graphic errors
- Weak sound effects

"A little extra effort spent on polishing the product could have upgraded it from a good rental choice to a good purchase choice."

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

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Rating

PlayStation
Hello Kitty
CUBE FRENZY

1 or 2 Players

Memory Card 1 block

Vibration Function Compatible

Developer	Culture Pub.
Publisher	NewKidCo
Genre	Puzzle

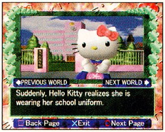
Hello Kitty's Cube Frenzy

Say hello to the PlayStation's cutest game

Once again proving that it's *really* tough to make a great kid game, Hello Kitty's Cube Frenzy is an unusual mix. The game claims to be aimed at girls six to 13 years old, and this target audience (the low end, anyway) is evident in the ultra-cute, ultra-simplistic Picture Book, which traces Kitty's adventures, joining the different costumes and locales into an only semicoherent story.

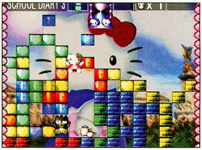
But the game itself seems (to this 20-something male reviewer, anyway) to be far too complex for even the average 13-year-old. A convoluted rule scheme makes it extremely hard to predict the results of your block placement. This wouldn't be a problem if you didn't have to arrange the blocks so carefully, but you can't just drop blocks at random and expect to get anywhere; you need to carefully maneuver Kitty around the board to pick up all the items.

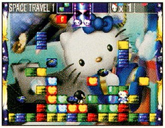
The good news is that for an older crowd—or at least for those of us who can put up with the excessive cuteness—this is a reasonably entertaining puzzle game and a new take on the falling-block concept, especially in two-player mode. It's worth a rental. *—Joe Rybicki*

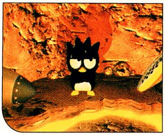

◆PREVIOUS WORLD NEXT WORLD◆

Suddenly, Hello Kitty realizes she is wearing her school uniform.

☐Back Page ✕Exit ○Next Page







The Picture Book (above left) assembles itself as Kitty progresses through all the game's possible story choices.

Box Score

Pros
- Interesting take on falling-block games
- It's just too cute!

Cons
- Probably too challenging for its target audience
- It's just too cute

● ● ◐ ○ ○

OPM Rating

PlayStation
bigair

1 or 2 Players

Memory Card 1~6 blocks

Analog Control Compatible

Vibration Function Compatible

Developer	Pitbull Syndicate
Publisher	Accolade
Genre	Sports

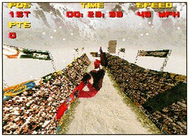
Big Air

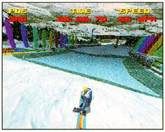
Big frustration

You know what I really don't like about the PlayStation controller? The way the handles are set up, it would be all too easy to grab each one, twist in opposite directions and tear the whole damned thing in half. And when it comes to games like Big Air, the possibility is almost too tempting to resist.

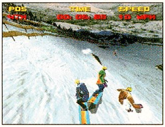
It's not the glitchy, clunky graphics that make this game so frustrating. It's not the awful soundtrack (usually the one thing that can be counted on to be really above-average in most "extreme sports" games), or the baffling slowdown that sets in seemingly at random. It's not even the fact that Big Air is YET ANOTHER snowboarding game in a genre that's managed to produce few superlative titles.

No, the problem is the control. See, Big Air not only suffers from the most ridiculously sluggish controls in the genre, but mixes these nasty controls with incomprehensible game physics—and it's a deadly combination. Why is it that it's sometimes possible to land a jump when you're tilted at a 45-degree angle, but other times impossible to land a jump straight up onto level ground? Argh! Only those who can appreciate the extensive board and clothing licenses need apply. *—Joe Rybicki*





Expect to get into plenty of scrapes when more than one other character appears onscreen (right), since the frame-rate will drop to somewhere around negative three.



Box Score

Pros
- Extensive board and clothing licenses
- Challenging trick system

Cons
- Sluggish controls
- Inconsistent physics
- Shoddy graphics
- Tired genre

● ◐ ○ ○ ○

OPM Rating

Developer	Sunsoft
Publisher	Sunsoft
Genre	Puzzle

boxart not available

1 or 2 Players

Memory Card 1 block

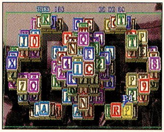
Shanghai: True Valor

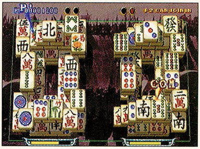
A traditional favorite returns

Shanghai is best described as a mixture of solitaire and memory with some of the trappings of mahjong. That may sound confusing, but the important thing is that it's one of those games that's easy to learn and hard to master. Don't let the mahjong tiles with Chinese writing scare you away.

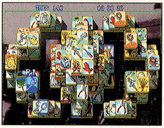
A vital part of any Shanghai title is a game's ability to serve up unique tile placements every time, which is a sure sign the engine behind the game is solid. True Valor achieves this (50 games and I swear no two have repeated yet). There's the standard Classic Mode along with several variations to round out the package, with my favorite being the Battle Mode, in which you pick one of several ancient Chinese warlords and throw down Shanghai style. In this mode, certain tile combinations can be used as weapons against your opponent, like creating a fire attack that makes it impossible for your foe to create combinations until the effect wears off.

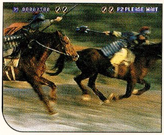
In a game where you sit for long periods of time matching tiles, you really need some catchy tunes to either pump you up or relax you in that Eastern sort of way—and here True Valor comes up a bit short. Overall, a very nice distraction, but it lacks ambition. *—Wataru Maruyama*





You can play with the Chinese Kanji characters or change them to the alphabet or household items. I suggest you stick with the Kanji and learn something for a change.



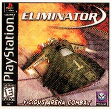


Box Score

Pros	Cons
• Challenging • Endless hours of gameplay • Neat special effects	• Dull music • Just a few play modes

● ● ● ○ ○

OPM Rating



1 or 2 Players

Memory Card 1 block

Vibration Function Compatible

Analog Control Compatible

Developer	Magneta Soft.
Publisher	Psygnosis
Genre	Action

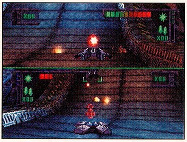
Eliminator

Eliminate this from your playlist

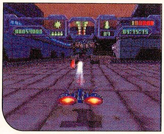
In a roundabout sort of way, Eliminator is like the classic arcade game Smash TV. You fly about from room to room, not allowed to move to the next room until you've cleared the current one of enemies. The magical thing about Smash TV is that somehow it never got boring—a magic that Eliminator clearly lacks.

Everything about this game—from the graphics to the gameplay and, oh lord, especially the horrific sound—feels like an amateurish effort. The aesthetics of each level are as grainy and dull as the one before it, and many of the end bosses are exactly the same, save a few different colored textures here and there. The regular enemies are even less impressive, usually consisting of very low numbers of polygons and looking like the most rudimentary of shapes. This game resembles a first-generation PlayStation game, and makes no bones about it. But worst of all are the sounds, which are a collection of some of the most annoying bleeps and bloops imaginable.

With better aesthetics and sound, Eliminator might have been salvageable, but as it stands now, it's just an utter waste. *—Kraig Kujawa*



The two-player mode is the best thing about the game, but it gets pretty boring a little too quickly (above).



Box Score

Pros	Cons
• Ummmmm • Hmmmmmm • Hmmm • OK, the two-player mode ain't horrible	• Bad graphics • Bad sound • Bad gameplay

● ◐ ○ ○ ○

OPM Rating

Review Recap

The final word—official and unbiased

Rollcage

A roundup of the most notable games of recent months

Brave Fencer Musashi

PlayStation
MUSASHI

Square ventures out of the cozy turn-based confines of the traditional RPG and ends up with a fine action/RPG, with the emphasis on action. Young Musashi has at his command a wide range of moves that he learns by defeating his enemies. The game can feel a bit linear at points, but the good graphics, excellent control, and variety of action, puzzles and minigames make Brave Fencer well worth a look.

OPM Rating ●●●●○

Civilization II

PlayStation
CIVILIZATION II

This is a rare thing in the world of PC-to-PlayStation ports: a completely faithful translation of an incredibly complex game. Civ II has everything strategy fans could ask for, allowing players to manage every facet of an entire civilization. Whether your goal is technological supremacy or simply global domination, you'll find plenty to whet your appetite for power.

OPM Rating ●●●●◐

Contender

PlayStation
CONTENDER

In contrast to Knockout Kings' statistic-heavy simulation, Contender is a genuinely fun boxing game that takes cues from classics like Punch-Out!! and Ring King. Sure, the baloony characters may look a bit goofy, but no one ever said boxers are supposed to be attractive.

OPM Rating ●●●●○

Crash Bandicoot: WARPED

PlayStation
CRASH

The third time's the charm for Naughty Dog's immensely popular marsupial. The latest game includes some much-needed variety in the form of widely different areas and gameplay mechanics, as well as graphics that are simply without peer.

OPM Rating ●●●●●

FIFA 99

PlayStation
FIFA 99

It's amazing what a difference a year can make. This time around EA gets their act together to put out their best soccer game ever. In-depth features, improved graphics and phenomenal multiplay make it the soccer game to beat.

OPM Rating ●●●●◐

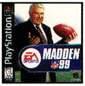
Guardian's Crusade

PlayStation
GUARDIAN'S CRUSADE

Although Activision's new RPG has a lot of great ideas (like the ability to train your little porcine sidekick, Baby), it fails to truly exploit any of them, resulting in a game that offers the illusion of depth but doesn't deliver. The entertaining characters and dialogue are dulled by the too-simple graphics and the short play time. Not bad, but not great by any means.

OPM Rating ●●●○○

Madden NFL 99



Simply the deepest, most realistic NFL football game on the PlayStation. No, it may not have the graphical punch of its major competitor, but it's got the stuff where it counts. This excellent pigskin simulation is the ideal choice for the die-hard football fan.

OPM Rating ●●●●◐

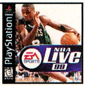
Metal Gear Solid

PlayStation
METAL GEAR SOLID

Some have said that this game doesn't live up to its prerelease hype because it's just too short. We say the game is so packed with extras, secrets and "holy-crap-that's-cool" innovations that the 10- to 15-hour completion time doesn't hurt it enough to matter. The story is wonderfully engrossing, the graphical style topnotch, and the voice-overs are the best yet. It was our Game of the Year for a reason. You need to own this true classic.

OPM Rating ●●●●●

NBA Live 99



EA's newest installment in the Live series sports AI improved from the previous version, loads of options and features, and improved graphics that actually show the players' emotions through an almost creepy use of facial expressions. The frame-rate could use some work, though, and because of the NBA lockout, the rosters are woefully out of date. Still, it's one of the best b-ball games yet.

OPM Rating ●●●●○

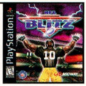
NCAA Football 99

PlayStation
NCAA FOOTBALL 99

A development team all its own has made NCAA 99 one hell of a college football game. Excellently challenging AI, loads of options and great polygonal graphics make this one a winner on all counts. And although its frame-rate could use a boost, EA's 32-bit football games have always been about realism over action. Nice job!

OPM Rating ●●●●◐

NFL Blitz



"Oh, that HAD to hurt!" To everyone's surprise, the console version actually more than does justice to Midway's arcade hit. Throw in Dual Shock support and Tournament and Season modes and you've

recap pick of the month

Legend of Legaia

PlayStation
Legend of LEGAIA

SCEA's newest RPG is a solid, entertaining game that punches a lot of classic RPG buttons while rarely sliding into cliché. The combat engine employs interesting hand-to-hand and magic systems: For hand-to-hand attacks, each character has a set number of slots with which players can create custom attacks, planning out each strike. The magic system is also unusual, requiring characters to dispatch magical enemies and absorb their powers for even the most basic spells.

Where Legaia really shines are in the writing and character development. Both are exceptional, with the writing being especially surprising given the translation problems that tend to plague native Japanese RPGs.

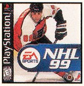
While the too-frequent (and too-lengthy) random battles can be frustrating, Legaia should offer a satisfying quest for any RPG fan.

OPM Rating ●●●●○

got one excellent port on your hands. Fast, addictive, brutal and just plain fun.

OPM Rating ●●●●●

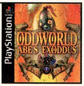
NHL 99



In an unfortunate example of why you shouldn't try to fix something that ain't broken, EA made some changes to their stunning NHL 98 engine and ended up with a slower, choppier game than last year's version. The inclusion of some new coaching strategies, a shot power meter and the Coaching Drill Mode almost compensates for its flaws—but not quite; last year's is still better.

OPM Rating ●●●●◐

Oddworld: Abe's Exoddus



The loveable Abe returns in what amounts to little more than a collection of new levels to add to the excellent Abe's Oddysee. Further variety in environments helps differentiate between the games, however, as does the ability to possess more creatures, the increased GameSpeak vocabulary and the vector of Mudokon emotions. The much-needed Quiksave eliminates the pesky checkpoints of the previous game. An all-around topnotch title.

OPM Rating ●●●●◐

Rollcage

Psygnosis' insane racer features indestructible vehicles in a world where gravity don't mean jack. It's an extremely entertaining racing experience (especially in two-player mode), marred only by the unbalanced levels of challenge, too-short tracks and occasional graphics glitches.

OPM Rating ●●●◐○

Silent Hill

When Konami decides to do a horror adventure in the vein of Resident Evil, they don't mess around: Silent Hill is perhaps the most disturbing game on the PlayStation. Although the controls could have used a *lot* of work, the creepy story, multiple endings and assortment of extras make the game worthwhile. Buy it for the sheer atmosphere and you'll find yourself leaving a light on at night. Not for the faint of heart.

OPM Rating ●●●●○

Street Sk8er

The PlayStation's first dedicated skateboarding game leaves quite a bit to be desired. Although EA manages to come through on most elements of skater atmosphere, the trick system is far too simplistic and the game in general simply isn't challenging enough to warrant more than a rental. Great soundtrack, though.

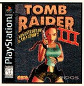
OPM Rating ●●◐○○

Syphon Filter

This game of high-tech espionage has drawn more than a few comparisons with Metal Gear Solid, but stands easily on its own merits. Although the game suffers from minor graphics and control issues, these pale in comparison to the imaginative level design and spectacular AI. A good bet for those seeking a thinking man's action game.

OPM Rating ●●●●○

Tomb Raider III



It's frustrating that two full years after the original title this game still looks and plays fundamentally the same. What was revolutionary back then is getting a bit tired. Still, this episode features the most realistic levels yet, most notably the city levels (light years ahead of the Venice levels of the previous game). But the controls are irritating, the levels are *very* unbalanced, and the game is loaded with bugs. Patience will pay off with this one, and you'll need a lot of it.

OPM Rating ●●●◐○

Twisted Metal III

Without SingleTrac at the helm of this beloved franchise, the game is far less imaginative than the previous versions. If you can't stand being without the familiar characters, this is for you. Otherwise, V8 and Rogue Trip are much more entertaining.

OPM Rating ●●◐○○

Vigilante 8

This game of vehicular combat takes the formula set forth by Twisted Metal and runs with it. Gigantic, realistic environments are the arenas, funky '70s characters are your enemies, and your vehicles range from a school bus to a (hidden) alien spacecraft. The powerful engine even allows huge craters to be blown in the ground. It's a blast!

OPM Rating ●●●●○

WCW/nWo Thunder

This is the unfortunate result of all the faction-and-alliance melodrama that's made wrestling so popular of late. Thunder includes lots of treats for the die-hard fan, but fails to deliver anything resembling fun. Bad AI, horrible controls and a useless camera make this one for avid fans only.

OPM Rating ●○○○○

Xenogears

Square proves they still got it with an immense RPG with an entirely unique engine and loads of other innovations. A great story, a necessity for any good RPG, is complemented by great graphics. A worthwhile experience for any RPG-er!

OPM Rating ●●●●○

Ratings at a Glance

Ace Combat 2	●●●●●
Activision Classics	●●○○○
Batman & Robin	●○○○○
Blasto	●●●◐○
Breath of Fire III	●●●◐○
C: Contra Adventure	●◐○○○
Castlevania: SotN	●●●●●
Col. Wars: Vengeance	●●●◐○
Crash Bandicoot 2	●●●●○
Dead or Alive	●●●●◐
Final Fantasy VII	●●●●●
Forsaken	●●●●○
G.Darius	●●●●○
Gex: Enter the Gecko	●●●◐○
Gran Turismo	●●●●●
Heart of Darkness	●●●●○
Hot Shots Golf	●●●●○
Judge Dredd	●◐○○○
Kartia	●●●●○
The Lost World: JP	●○○○○
Micro Machines	●●●●●
MLB 99	●●●●○
Mortal Kombat 4	●●●◐○
NBA Shoot Out 98	●●●◐○
Need For Speed III	●●●●○
NFL GameDay 99	●●●●○
NFL Xtreme	●●○○○
OW: Abe's Oddysee	●●●●○
Parasite Eve	●●●●○
Pitfall 3D	●●○○○
Point Blank	●●●◐○
Rogue Trip	●●●◐○
Rugrats	●●●◐○
SaGa Frontier	●●●◐○
San Francisco Rush	●●●○○
Soul Blade	●●●●◐
Spyro the Dragon	●●●●○
Tekken 3	●●●●●
Tomb Raider	●●●●○
Tomb Raider II	●●●●◐
Tomba!	●●●●○
Triple Play 99	●●◐○○

Legend of LEGAIA™

Legaia is a vast world, requiring a great deal of exploring, as all self-respecting RPGs do. The hero, Vahn, must save the world from devastation using the mystical powers of the Ra-Seru. The following walk-through has been broken down into the main events in the story line. Included to aid you on your journey is a comprehensive moves list for all three characters. To top it all off, you will find a list of game secrets, hints to the various minigames and locations of the hidden Ra-Seru powers. Now, prepare to delve into the monster-strewn world of Legaia.

MAGIC SYSTEM

Absorbing New Spells

Acquiring new spells can become quite time-consuming. You may need to fight an enemy several times before you actually absorb its attack into your Ra-Seru. The key thing to remember when you are trying to obtain the new spells is to not use magic. Killing a creature with hand-to-hand combat is the only way to receive the new Seru powers.

Maximizing Your Spells

The game rewards you for using magic, even though it is pretty time-consuming. After so many uses with a specific magic spell, its level will increase. There are a total of nine levels any one Seru can raise. As your spells increase in their levels, they will gain extra effects. For example, when you use Vera [Light] a lot, eventually it will begin to cure more than just your health. It will begin to remove rot and numb plus poisons. The more attack-oriented spells will do extra effects as well. This takes a lot of time, though, and should only be done when you are not pushing forward in the game. Try to do this in areas where you can rest for free, like at the spring west of Rim Elm.

COMBO SYSTEM

High/Low Hits

The enemies you face will sometimes be weaker in the upper areas of their bodies rather than the lower. Some may also be floating or flying creatures. In those cases, any attack directed at the lower area will definitely miss. Just look at the enemies with a little common sense and plan your attacks accordingly.

Discovering New Techniques

The best way to find new techniques is to just experiment. There are a pretty good amount available for each character. If you really want to know the combos for each, there are complete lists of each character's combinations. Keep in mind that equipping certain weapons on certain characters may change the number of different commands that can be entered.

WALK·THROUGH

Rim Elm

- The beginning of your adventure. There is not too much to do here, so walk around and talk to everyone. Be sure to speak to Tetsu on the southern beach. He will teach you the basics of fighting and combos.

Val: I still don't believe what happened yesterday. I never knew the Genesis Tree had such powers.

- Soon after you start resting, you will be awakened by a banging sound coming from the outer wall. Before you examine the wall's gate, use the memory statue to save. There will be several battles to fight soon, which can be a little challenging at the start.

Mei: Here! I brought you the hunting clothes I promised you

- When the battles start, head quickly over to Mei's home. Take her with you to your home and then head to the Genesis Tree in the center of town. Touch the tree and then accept the Ra-Seru. Head back to Vahn's house and talk to your father.

Fresh Spring

- This is a great place to stop and replenish your health and magic for free. You should use this place as much as possible in the beginning to build some levels.

Clean water flows from the spring.
Do you wish to drink this water?

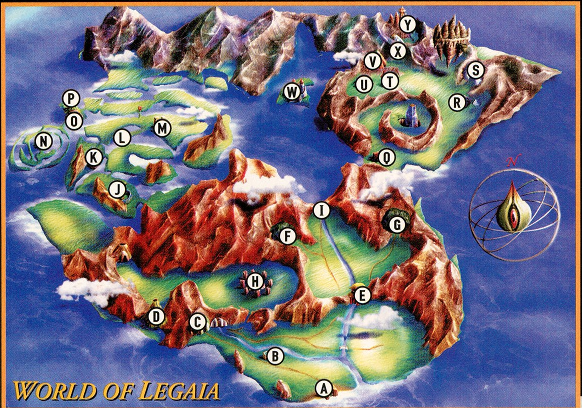
Drake Kingdom

- All the people in the kingdom have locked themselves in cages to prevent the Seru that are controlling them from doing much harm.

- You will have to find a key for each door you get to. The keys for these doors will always be in the immediate area. Your ultimate destination is Mt. Rikorouku. Don't be afraid to travel back to the Fresh Spring to recover lost health or magic.

Vahn LV 4
HP 301/ 301
MP 43/ 43

Vahn
29
Somersault
3 HIT
TOTAL 56
Skeleton



A - Rim Elm
B - Fresh Spring
C - Drake Kingdom
D - Mt. Rikuroa
E - Biron Monastery
F - East Voz Forest
G - West Voz Forest
H - Zeto's Dungeon
I - Ancient Water Cave
J - Jeremi
K - Vidna
L - Octam
M - Gate of Shadows
N - Dohati's Castle
O - Ratayu
P - Mt. Letona
Q - Karisto Station
R - Buma
S - Nivora Ravine
T - Usha Research Center
U - Uru Mais
V - Mt. Dhini
W - Soren Camp
X - Conkram
Y - Jette's Fortress

East/West Forest

• The forest itself is not too hard for a party of three—just be sure to have a good supply of Healing Leaves. You will need to find the Weed Hammer in order to get all the treasures and get to the end of the forest. The hammer can be found in a treasure chest on the east side of the East Forest.

• At the end of the forest you will face a pair of bosses. They are not too difficult and should be easy to confuse with Nighto.

Mt. Rikuroa

• After heading up the last set of stairs in Drake Kingdom, you will switch to Noa. Use her early training battles to get used to her. She will be your fastest fighter.

• After following the story you will get to run through the mountain a little. Be sure to check in all the little nooks and crannies to acquire some useful healing items. Also in the beginning areas, try to take advantage of the wolf as much as possible, since when you are defeated in a battle she will revive you for free.

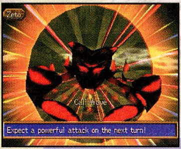
• Once you get to the top the game will switch back to Vahn and you will have a short run up. Save before you head to the top, because a somewhat tough battle will shortly follow.

Biron Monastery

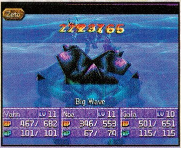
• The monastery is where all Biron monks come from. Here you can learn a few new techniques (one for each character) and meet your future rival. To get to the next Genesis Tree you will have to talk to Zupo, the head monk. He will give you access to the East Forest and give you Gala as another party member. Gala will be pretty weak, and you will have to baby him throughout the forest.

Mist Generator (Zeto's Dungeon)

• This is the source of all the mist. It is a pretty easy dungeon with some moderately difficult enemies. There are two save points inside the place, so don't be too afraid of losing your progress.



Expect a powerful attack on the next turn!



Spirit up when Zeto uses the Call Wave. The next turn you will receive much less damage when the Big Wave hits.

• Here you will have to battle Songi in a one-on-one with Gala, so be sure to have him prepared with the Vera Seru beforehand. Once you put Songi down you will have to continue downstairs and take on Zeto. Zeto uses a big wave attack that damages the whole party for a lot of hit points, but he must charge it one round beforehand. When he does charge it, be sure to use Spirit for the next round, or you will take a lot of damage. Keep your party healed and continue to dish out damage to take him out.

Jeremi

• When you enter Jeremi you will notice that the whole town is filled with Seru-controlled citizens. You can talk to them and they won't attack you. But for the most part, try to examine the houses scattered throughout the town and collect as much treasure as you can before heading to the center-northern building.

• In this building you will get access to the Sky Garden. This is a somewhat simple area with a little treasure scattered around. One piece of advice to find all the treasure here is to be sure to enter every elevator. When you reach the top, go through the maze and enter into battle with the Seru chomping on the Genesis Tree.

Caruban
Fire Breath
Vahn LV 5
HP 340/ 376
MP 46/ 52
Noa LV 5
HP 108/ 300
MP 36/ 36

• This boss is pretty tough because he can—and will—dish out an enormous amount of damage. Try to use big Spirit-charged combos and high-level magic. Make sure to designate at least one fighter as your healer.

Noa: A Seru? I didn't know Seru could be this weird.

MOVE LIST KEY

← Super Arts
← Miracle Arts
← Hyper Arts
← Basic Arts

VAHN

COMMAND	MOVE NAME	AP USED
→ ↓ ← ↑ ← ↑ → ↓ ←	Vahn's Craze	90
↑ ↓ → ← ← ↓ ↑ ↑ ←	Rolling Combo	66
↑ ↓ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↓ ↑	Tri-Somersault	60
↓ → ↑ ↓ ← ← ↓	Maximum Blow	54
← → ← ← ↓ → ↑	Fire Tackle	54
↓ → ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ←	Power Slash	54
→ ↓ ← ↓ ←	Burning Flare	40
→ → ↓ ←	Fire Blow	32
→ → ←	Tornado Flame	24
↓ ↑ ↑ ↑	Cyclone	24
↑ ↑ ↓ ↓	Hurricane	24
↓ ↑ ↑ ←	PK Combo	24
↑ ↓ → ←	Spin Combo	24
← → ↑ ←	W-Upper	24
↓ ↓ ↓ ↑	Cross-Kick	24
← ← ↓	Power Punch	18
↑ ↓ ←	Slash Kick	18
↑ ↓ ↑	Somersault	18
↓ → ↑	Tackle Crush	18
← → ←	Hyper Elbow	18

NOA

COMMAND	MOVE NAME	AP USED
← ↑ → ↓ ↑ ← ↑ ↓ →	Noa's Ark	90
→ → ↑ ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ← →	Love You	72
→ → ← → → ← ↑ ↑ ↑	Super Tempest	60
↓ ↓ ↓ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↓ ↑	Triple Lizard	66
↑ ↓ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↓ ↓	Dragon Fangs	54
↑ ↑ ← ↓ → ↓ →	Super Javelin	48
← ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↓ →	Hurricane Kick	56
← ← → ← →	Vulture Blade	40
← ← → →	Frost Breath	32
→ → ← ↑ ↑ ↑	Tempest Break	36
↑ ↑ ← ↓ →	Rushing Gale	30
↓ ↑ ↓ ← →	Tough Love	30
↓ ↑ ↑ ↑	Swan Diver	24
↓ ↓ ↓ ↑	Bird Step	24
→ → ← →	Dolphin Attack	24
→ → ↑ ↑	Mirage Lancer	24
→ ← ↓	Wind Strike	18
→ ↓ →	Sonic Javelin	18
↑ ↓ ↓	Beast Fangs	18
↑ ↓ ↑	Lizard Tail	18

Vidna

- This town is located north of Jeremi and is free of the Mist. Here you will meet Zalan's son and also get some hints on where to go next. From here you can go back to Jeremi and deliver the item to Zalan or head north and east to Octam. If you return the trinket to Zalan, you will receive Zalan's Crown in return. Once you're done, head to Octam.

Octam

- Explore the town. There are a few things here and there you can pick up, but the main clue is in the east house. In the cupboard you will find a note giving a clue as to what happened to the people.

- Once you finish, head to the center door and go down to the lowest level. Read all the books and another staircase will appear. You will then learn that you must go back to Jeremi and collect the Star Pearl from Zalan. Once you do that, head to the Shadow Gate.

The Gate of Shadows

- To activate the correct sequence in the gate, remember the hints given back in Octam. In case you forgot here they are: North Gate, the Key is Earth. East Gate, the Key is Wind. South Gate, the Key is Water. West Gate, the Key is Fire.

- When you enter into the gate, go to the right path (the left only leads to a Healing Flower), then go left. The right path leads to a Life Ring. Next go left (the right path leads to a Wonder Elixir). These paths all lead to one place, Lower Octam.

Lower Octam

- Here you will meet Hari and get some direction for the future. After talking to Hari head to the northwest side of town to get into the fire path. The fire path itself is not complicated. Follow the pathways and you will get through.

- Be sure to check the pillars with yellow light coming out of them. This means there is a room inside with a treasure chest.

- Once you hit the lava area, be careful of the stronger enemies. You will face Xain, who is the one creating all the tremors. After beating Xain, he will freeze the lava and give you the Wind Book II. Head back up to the surface.

Vahn LV15
HP 828/ 910
MP 139/ 139
Noa LV13
HP 596/ 698
MP 91/ 91
Gala LV13
HP 694/ 809
MP 195/ 195

Gi Delilas: Well, Vahn!
Let's see how good you are!
Fight me one on one!

Gala: Wait, Noa!
Don't go by yourself!

Xain: Don't interrupt me! I'm doing something important ordered by Dohati!

GALA

COMMAND	MOVE NAME	AP USED
→ → ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ← ←	Biron Rage	90
← → ← ↑ ← ← → ↑ ←	Neo Rising	66
↓ ↑ ← ↑ ↑ ← ↓ ↓	Heaven's Drop	60
↑ ↓ ↓ ↑ ← → ←	Back Punch x2	54
↓ ↑ ← ↑ ↑ ↓ ↓	Super Ironhead	54
← → ↓ ↑ ← ↑ ↑	Rushing Crush	54
← ← → → →	Explosive Fist	40
→ → ↑ ←	Lightning Storm	32
→ → ←	Thunder Punch	24
← ↑ → ↓ ←	Bull Horns	30
↑ ← ↓ → ←	Hand Fangs	30
← ← → ↑ ←	Neo Raising	30
↑ ← ↓ ↓	Black Rain	24
↓ ↓ ↑ ↑	Side Kick	24
← ↑ ↑	Head-Splitter	18
← ↑ ←	Guillotine	18
← → ←	Back Punch	18
↑ ↓ ↓	Ironhead	18
← → ↓	Battering Ram	18
↓ ↑ ←	Flying Knee Attack	18

Vidna (Again)

- In Vidna the windmills have stopped turning. It seems the frozen magma has stopped producing geothermal power to this city, and the Mist has claimed it.

- First, talk to the rest of the people in town. They are hiding in Danpas' basement. In the Machine Room, you can also collect the Spring Salts the mayor of Octam wants. Once you deliver these salts, you will learn the location of the next Genesis Tree.

Saryu: You have done something I have not ordered. I don't like you! You must die!

Ratayu

- In the town you can find a treasure chest in just about every building. You will need to go to the east side to get to the Genesis Tree, but in order to get through the checkpoint, travel to the palace.

- Head all the way to the back of the palace and talk with Saryu. He will give you the key to the east side. The east-side area is pretty small, but there are some strong creatures there.

- At the top of the mountain you will find a Genesis Tree covered by a force field. You can't get through this force field, so after collecting the treasure chest on the west side of it, you'll have to leave. However, when you try to leave, Songi will attack. You must defeat him in order to lower the force field. Once you beat him, head back to the town, but be sure to save along the way.

- When you get into town, rest and upgrade your weapons and armor. Head to the inn and talk to Eliza. Talk to her again and have Noa go in her place. After a moderate dialogue, you battle Saryu. He is somewhat strong and only gets stronger as the game progresses. After beating him you will free all the town's daughters and get the key to the west area.

GAME SECRETS

Rim Elm before Meta

- After the Mist arrives in Rim Elm and before Vahn puts on the Ra-Seru Meta, talk to the lady in the weapons/items shop and she'll give you Healing Leaves.

Honey in Rim Elm

- Check the tree in Rim Elm that's near one of the windmills. You will be attacked by a swarm of bees, but if you defeat the bees, you will get Honey! Honey increases all stats by four. Careful—if you talk to Nene with Honey in your possession, she will take it from you to bake a cake.

Locked Drawer in Rim Elm

- If you leave Rim Elm once and then go back to the town, the drawer that was locked on the second floor of the shop will be opened. Inside there is a Point Card. The Point Card earns points worth 5 percent of the price of items, etc. when you shop. Exchange points for items at the prize-exchange counters in Sol, at the slot machines or at the fishing holes.

Save Mei

- When the Mist arrives in Rim Elm, go to Mei's house and take her to your house so she won't be alone. Mei will give you her Pendant when you leave Rim Elm. (Otherwise you won't be able to get this item until you talk to Mei in the final area, the Bio Castle.)

Terra the Teacher

- When Noa is training in Mt. Rikuroa, talk to Terra after two battles. She will teach you an art move.

Drake Castle Shopping Area

- After reviving the Genesis Tree at Mt. Rikuroa and the Mist has cleared from Drake Castle, the people of the castle open shops in the castle's front area. Noa gets all excited and will run off to the weapons shop, items shop and inn. If you follow her to the weapons shop and talk to her, she'll ask you what money is. Answer that you don't know and you'll get the Fighting Robe for free. Follow her to the items shop, and of the three questions, answer two to three questions correctly to receive five to 10 Healing Leaves. Answer all incorrectly, and you'll get a Magic Leaf.

Hidden Ra-Seru Magic Spells

- When Vahn, Noa and Gala have learned all their art moves, travel to the Genesis Trees where each respective character obtained his/her Ra-Seru to unlock the hidden Terra, Meta and Ozma spells.

Other Hidden Magic Spells

- After defeating the final Songi, pick up the Dark Stone at the base of the Genesis Tree in West Voz Forest. Go to Jeremi and talk to Zalan. Get the Dark Talisman to be able to use the hidden Dark Ra-Seru Jedo spell.

- With all characters' levels at 99, head to Ratayu and talk to Saryu. Get the key to the basement to enter the Juggernaut Room. Here you'll obtain the Evil Talisman in order to use the Juggernaut magic spell.

Hidden Boss Lapis

- After the event where you visit the Soren Camp, if you go to Mt. Dhini again, a hidden boss enemy—Lapis—appears. If you defeat him, you get the Evil Medallion—an item that is otherwise only available by defeating the final boss character. You will not be able to control a character wearing an Evil Medallion (Berserk status), but that character will be able to attack enemies with learned art moves 0-15 times at a certain percentage rate. However, Lapis is extremely strong; he will always attack first and leave you with zero MP.

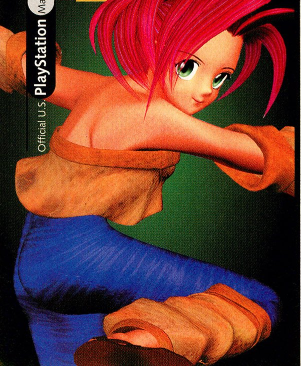
DANCE FEVER

When you get to Sol you can go to the Muscle Dome and win a prize called the Gold Card. With this prize, you will be able to go to the Dance Club. With 500 gold pieces you can enter the dance contest. Before you do that, go up to the guy with the big 'fro on the dance floor and ask him to teach you how to dance.

- Once you have the timing down try to enter. You have to go through two rounds to win the contest. The first round is pretty easy, and as long as you don't miss many steps, you should be able to progress to the next level. In the second level, you will need to bust out some special moves in order to win.

- The easiest way to win is to use your Triangle specials on the first three moves. This gives you a good lead, and if you don't miss any steps, you should easily win.

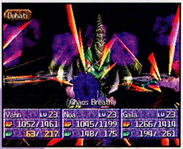
- What do you win? Well, you win some gold pieces and a swimsuit. You'll also earn the respect of some of the Sol residents. You also should definitely check out the lady in the Jazz Club sitting next to Grantes.



Dohati's Castle

- When you enter the castle, take the left branch first, because every hall leads to a treasure box. The right hall will take you to the next level by escalator. Each time you see an escalator, take it up. The generator is on the top level of the castle.

Dohati: Fools! You shall all feel the power of my wrath!


Dohati
Chaos Breath
Vahn LV 23 HP 1052/1061 MP 63/ 217
Noa LV 23 HP 1005/1199 MP 148/ 175
Gala LV 23 HP 1266/1410 MP 194/ 261

Dohati is a powerful adversary to face.

- At the top you will have to fight Dohati. His attacks do an enormous amount of damage, and his Chaos Breath can inflict venom on your fighters. Try to keep a medium-level orb in your spell list and have it ready to use. He takes a lot of damage but you should be able to dish out a good amount of damage on him each round as long as you keep one of your fighters dedicated to healing.

- Once you beat him the generator will be destroyed and the flying trains will be back in service. You need to go to Octam to use these trains.

Sol

- This extremely large town has a bunch of attractions for you. One thing you should be sure to check out is the casino. You can play the games for coins or fight in the arena. The Baka Fighter game is a pretty easy way to earn coins. For the first fight, all you need to do is press Square, the second fight is X, and the third is Circle. The fourth match is Square and X, and the fifth is Circle and X.

- Travel to the top floor and talk with the leader of the Biron monks. After talking with him, you fight Gaza. He is *very* tough to beat, because his Astral Sword attack can easily deplete all your HPs. Keep one or two of your fighters healing the party and the rest laying into him.

- After beating him, go to the lower levels. Obtain eight loaves of Soru bread—this can be done easier if you go into the Muscle Dome and play the games to acquire enough coins to buy them. Once you have the bread, head to each treasure chest and examine them and use the bread on them.

- Once you get to the bottom level, manipulate the switches for the electric grates to get to the center. Start by going to the right and then to the middle. Hit the top-middle switch and go to the top-bottom switch. Follow the switches until you can flip the bottom big switch.

- Once you get to the center, prepare for a big battle. Songi will show up with Gaza again, and you will have to fight a much tougher version of Gaza. Keep your guys' health over 1,100, or you may fall victim to Gaza's huge power attack. Once you beat him, plant the Genesis Tree, and you'll be able to go on your way.

Usha Research Center

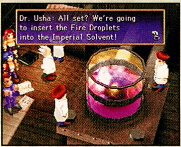
- To get into this tower, you will need the password you should have received from the Emperor. He is in the lower floor of the inn that's in Sol Tower. The doctor is on the top floor. He will say you need to go to Uru Masi to get the much-needed Fire Droplets.

- To get the key for the city, the doctor's wife will test you. She will ask three questions, and you will need to answer all of them to get the key. The questions are simple, and if you were paying attention throughout the discussion with the doctor, you should get them easily.

Uru Mais

- Here you will need to examine the book in the smaller house area. Once you do that, you should examine the center of the machine. Once the doors on the sides open, go through each open door to light up the center. When the center is lit, you will get some more information and then the fire droplet. Upon getting the droplet, leave and head back to the research center and Dr. Usha.

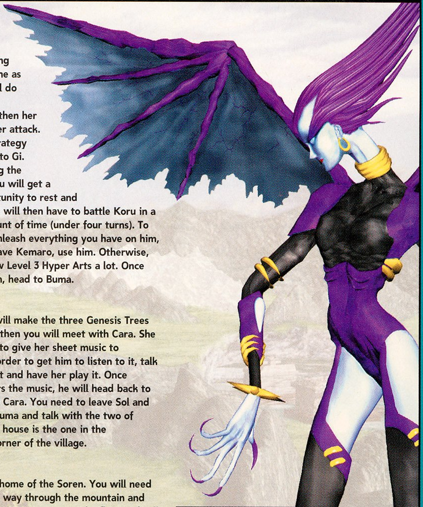
The Stone Stage awaits you. It awaits your dreams, it awaits your mind, Noa.



Dr. Usha: All set? We're going to insert the Fire Droplets into the Imperial Solvent!

Nivora Ravine

- To get through this ravine, split into three groups. Each group will have to help the other to get through their respective areas. If you play them in order until one of them gets stuck at an area and can't go any farther, the first person to get to the end will be Noa, followed by Gala and finally Vahn. The key to beating Che is to know when to avoid his Megaton Press. He will attack normally twice and then perform the



Megaton Press. The key to beating Lu is the same as Che. She will do two normal attacks and then her special power attack. The same strategy also applies to Gi. After beating the Delilases, you will get a short opportunity to rest and recover. You will then have to battle Koru in a certain amount of time (under four turns). To beat Koru unleash everything you have on him, and if you have Kemaro, use him. Otherwise, use your new Level 3 Hyper Arts a lot. Once you beat him, head to Buma.

Buma

- Here you will make the three Genesis Trees recover and then you will meet with Cara. She will ask you to give her sheet music to Grantes. In order to get him to listen to it, talk to the pianist and have her play it. Once Grantes hears the music, he will head back to Buma and to Cara. You need to leave Sol and go back to Buma and talk with the two of them. Cara's house is the one in the northwest corner of the village.

Mt. Dhini

- This is the home of the Soren. You will need to push your way through the mountain and get to the top, so you can use the flute and call the Soren for help.

Floating Castle

- After talking to the Soren elder, visit the floating castle. The dungeon itself is pretty easy. There is one spot where you can pick up some free life water. After taking the elevator down, in the first hallway, you can go down the right-hand side. A secret tunnel lies there which will lead to the treasure chest.

- The Soren secrets that were mentioned back in the town can be found inside the horrible machine. You need to open the machine. To get into the Throne Room, activate both switches that are outside the door.

Zora
Glare
Gala HP 2068 / 2068 MP 352 / 377

Conkram

- When you enter this town, you will notice that it is actually one big Seru. You need to go to the back of the town and enter the Throne Room. Go all the way to the back and talk with Noa's mother. After talking with Noa's mother, head back to the courtyard of the castle and head to the west side with the guards. You will now be able to get past them and into the basement.

- In the basement you can talk to the king and acquire the Seru flame. Once you have the flame go back upstairs and into the room to the right of the queen. From there you will be teleported into Conkram's past. In the past you should do whatever business you can and talk to all the people, then go to the inn and spend the night there. After watching the new demonstration, make your way to the basement.

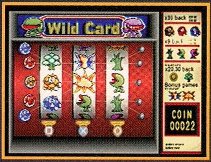
Noa: Father, it's me!
I'm here, Father!
I came to see you.

Finally reaching Conkram, your party will discover that it has been completely taken over by the Mist.

SLOT MACHINES

When you get into Vidna, you will get your first chance to play a casino game. Buy some coins in order to play the slot machine. It costs 100 gold coins to get one game coin.

- In Vidna you can win some good prizes early in the game, if you want to spend the time. In Sol you can win much better prizes and can get some free coins, if you play the Baka fighter game.



- There is no real good way to win at the slot machine. You simply need a lot of luck to get a good match. Try to get the three punches or three kicks to match up. When you do this, you will get to go to a bonus game that will give you massive coins if you get high numbers on the spin.

- If you want to get some more coins for free, fight in the Muscle Dome contest. It takes 100 gold coins to enter and the contest is very challenging, even on the beginner level! Try to enter once you have Kemaro and some good armor. You should be able to win at least the beginner level. If you win that level you will be rewarded with 818 free coins.

Slot Machine Prizes – VIDNA

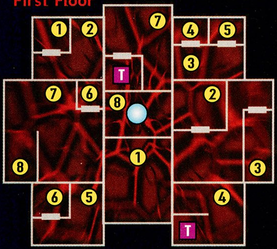
War Soul	1,000
Spirit Jewel	800
Guardian Ring	400
Fury Boost	150
Power Elixir	80
Shield Elixir	80
Speed Elixir	80
Phoenix	50
Heavy Lure	10
Normal Lure	5
Light Lure	2

Slot Machine Prizes – SOL

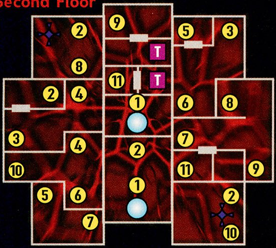
Evil God Icon	10,000
Lost Grail	8,000
Life Armband	5,000
Deluxe Rod	2,500
Vitality Ring	1,000
Magic Ring	500
Healing Berry	250
Incense	200
Fury Boost	150
Soru Bread	100
Gold Card	50

THE ROGUE TOWER

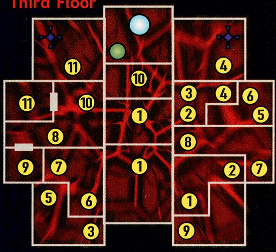
First Floor



Second Floor



Third Floor



⑤	●	✦	T	●
Warp Point	Floor Warp	Mid Boss	Chest	Save Point

Noa
Frost Breath
Caruban Lv2

Rogue

Rogue Flame

Vahn LV35	Noa LV35	Gala LV35
HP 2387/2387	HP 1986/1986	HP 2301/2301
MP 349/380	MP 300/314	MP 396/421

The path to battling Rogue at the top of the tower is a treacherous one to take.

Rogue Tower

- In the tower you will have a good old-fashioned teleporter maze. See the map to find the correct path through. You will need to face a couple of upgraded bosses here, so be ready for anything. At the end of the third level, you will face the head rogue. The key to winning is to attack one round then block one round. Every other round that passes the rogue will attack.

- After beating the rogue tower you will be teleported back to Conkram in the past. Finish any business you have in the shops, talk to all the people again, and then go to the mirror room and head home. Once you get back to the present time, head to the Absolute Fortress to the north of Conkram.

- **Map** The Rogue Tower itself is a big teleporter maze. To read the maps just follow the numbers (i.e., 1 leads to 1, 2 leads to 2, etc.). Also keep in mind that you should only go through a teleporter when the tower is like a castle, or you will be teleported back to the beginning. Some teleporters have more than one destination.

Jette's Fortress

- The fortress maze in the beginning is not complicated. Usually there is only one way you can go, and that is the way you have to go. There is an occasional treasure chest thrown around for good measure. Try to always collect these things as they are usually high-level items that cannot be acquired anywhere else.

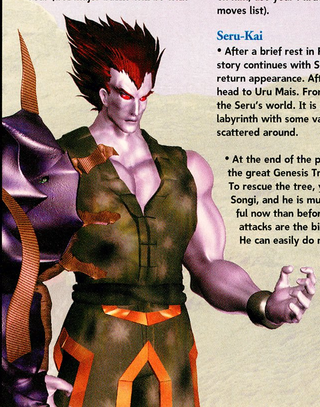
- Your first major battle will be with Jette. His most dangerous attack is his Shadow Break. This will cause a good deal of group damage. Keep one of your fighters ready with an Orb or Spoon Seru, and you shouldn't have too much trouble.

- The path to the end of the fortress is pretty straightforward, but be ready for a great challenge at the end. Right as you reach the Mist Generator, you will encounter Cort. His first attack will be his Mystic Shield. While his shield is up, only Arts attacks will do any damage. To get the most damage on him, use your Miracle Arts (see moves list).

Seru-Kai

- After a brief rest in Rim Elm the story continues with Songi making a return appearance. After his cinema, head to Uru Mais. From there go to the Seru's world. It is a simple labyrinth with some valuable treasure scattered around.

- At the end of the path you will find the great Genesis Tree and Songi. To rescue the tree, you'll fight Songi, and he is much more powerful now than before. His normal attacks are the biggest problems. He can easily do more than 2,000 points of damage in one combo.



Juggernaut

- After beating Songi you will be back in the normal world. You must now enter Juggernaut and finish it off from the inside. The maze inside Juggernaut is pretty easy, but expect some strong resistance as far as general encounters go.

- Before you enter into Juggernaut you should check a couple of the Genesis Trees, namely the one in the east Voz Forest and the one on Mt. Rikuroku. You should be able to get a couple new Seru from there. These will aid you immensely in your upcoming battle, but they do suck up a lot of magic points. If you can, train them outside of Juggernaut, where you can rest. Juggernaut on the inside is a pretty easy labyrinth to navigate.

- When you get to the end you will face the ultimate boss. You must keep your fighters at max hit points at all times. Cort can perform an attack that, if your fighters are slightly weak, can wipe them right out. Keep your party healed and use high-level combinations like the Miracle Arts. This is also a great place to use your point card, if you collected it (see secrets).

SECRET RA-SERU SPELLS

NAME	MP	EFFECT	TARGETS
(Dark) Ra-Seru Jedo	200	Deadly Promise	All Enemies
(Earth) Ra-Seru Palma	200	Meteor Cluster	All Enemies
(Light) Ra-Seru Horn	200	Resurrector	All Allies
(Water) Ra-Seru Mule	200	Deep Avalanche	All Enemies
(Fire) Ra-Seru Meta	240	Inferno	All Enemies
(Thunder) Ra-Seru Ozma	240	Voltagor	All Enemies
(Wind) Ra-Seru Terra	240	Queen Twister	All Enemies
(Evil) Juggernaut	255	Unknown (Dark Eclipse)	All Enemies

SECRET RA-SERU LOCATIONS

Do you want Zalan to rework the Dark Stone?

Ra-Seru Jedo

- Get the Dark Stone from West Voz Forest, after your first visit to the Genesis Tree. You'll find it in a treasure chest next to the tree.

With the power of the Genesis Tree, Meta's level increased to [illegible].

Ra-Seru Palma

- Purchase the Earth Egg at the Muscle Dome for 100,000 coins, then take it to Zalan.

Ra-Seru Horn

- Take Cara's Ra-Seru Egg to Zalan in Jeremi and he will turn it into the Light Talisman. Equip to use it.

Ra-Seru Mule

- Purchase the Water Egg for 20,000 points at the fishing hole east of Buma.

Ra-Seru Meta

- Go to the Genesis Tree in Warrior Square (in the Sol Tower basement). Touch the tree to obtain Vahn's secret Seru power.

Ra-Seru Ozma

- Go to East Voz Forest and touch the Genesis Tree to get Gala's secret power.

Ra-Seru Terra

- Go to Mt. Rikuroa and touch the Genesis Tree there to get Noa's secret power.

Ra-Seru Juggernaut

- All three characters must reach level 99. Having cleared Dohati's Castle, go to Ratayu and speak to Saryu. He'll give you the Evil Seru Key. Go to the lab to find the Evil Talisman. It will also summon Juggernaut and reduce your encounter rate.

FISHING GAME

There are two places in the Legaia world where you can fish for a while. As you go through the world you will find a total of three different rods. The first rod is found at the beach in Vidna when the Mist enters the town. The second can be won in the Sol casino. The third can be obtained from Dr. Usha after you open up Nivora Ravine. You will also need to get some lures before you can fish. To get the much-needed lures, play the slot machine in Vidna (see casino sidebar).

- When you are fishing, cast into places where the fish can hide, like behind rocks or in the brush. There you will find some of the larger fish that are worth more points.

- After you cast try tapping your line in to lure the fish to bite. The heavier the lure the deeper it will stay and the heavier the fish you will catch.

Fishing Prizes – By VIDNA	
Mettle Armband	1,500
Power Ring	1,000
Healing Fruit	500
Lippian Flute	200
Spikefish Flute	200

Fishing Prizes – By BUMA	
Life Grail	6,500
Magic Grail	6,500
Spirit Talisman	4,000
Lippian Flute	200
Spikefish Flute	200

MARVEL SUPER HEROES VS. STREET FIGHTER

An Expert Gamer Strategy
by Pat Dolan

As the name implies, Marvel Super Heroes vs. Street Fighter allows you to use characters from the Marvel Super Heroes game and characters from Street Fighter in head-to-head combat. You choose your "main" character, then choose a partner who can assist during certain Super Moves. Combat is fast and furious, with spectacular, over-the-top attacks and effects all around. In other words, it captures the feel of comic-book combat quite well.

As in X-Men vs. Street Fighter, the "tag team" feature of the arcade game has pretty much been eliminated from the PlayStation version. In the basic game modes, you can't change between your main character and his/her partner. However, a new play mode, Cross Over, allows you to switch between characters at any time. The catch? Both players must use the same two characters. Still, this does give you some variety, and is a welcome inclusion.

Getting Started

Learn to combo! Go into the Training Mode and practice linking your chosen character's moves together to form deadly combos. The goal is to land a single blow on your unblocking opponent, then take advantage of that to do severe damage with a big combo. Be sure to set the CPU opponent to auto blocking, so you can judge whether your attempts are successful. If you want to land the maximum number of blows, concentrate on air combos. They're a little easier to execute than ground combos, since the victim remains helpless for a longer period of time because of the launcher, allowing you to fudge the timing of your blows a bit more. Also, most characters can link a larger selection of moves during air combos than they can on the ground.

NEW HER
SPIDER-MAN
5HIT

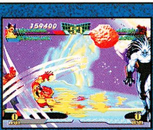
Offensive Strategy

Concentrate on mastering quick 2- to 4-hit combos, preferably ending in a Super Move. Many characters are capable of doing 5- to 10-hit combos, but those tend to be useful only in very specific circumstances, or require extremely fast reflexes to pull off. If you mess them up, you're a sitting duck. Plus, the longer the combo, the less damage each blow in the combo will do. As a result, you can often do as much or more damage with a 4-hit combo as with an 8-hit one.

Vs. the CPU

Against the CPU, if you've got a character with distance attacks, use them to tick off damage slowly, but be ready to deal with a jump-in attack at any time. Most characters have good moves to counter this. If your character has aerial missile attacks, use them. The CPU does a poor job of blocking these attacks. Once the CPU gets in close, it's quite good at unleashing combos off of hits that you don't block, so be on your guard. Unless it's executing an attack of its own or is still recovering from one of your attacks, the CPU will almost never fall for your Super Combos. Use your Super Combos only when you've got a clear opening; otherwise you're just wasting energy.

Team-Up Attacks



While it's not quite the tag-team experience it was in the arcade, Marvel Super Heroes vs. Street Fighter at least has the team-up attacks intact. These allow you and your partner to launch Super Combos at the same time, resulting in a tremendous amount of damage to your opponent if they connect.

- Each team member will do one of his/her Super Combos, generally one that matches a Super Combo of his/her partner. If your main character doesn't have a missile Super Combo, his/her partner won't use one either. It's generally best to pick a partner of similar skills, so you can have more compatible team-up attacks.

- It takes two Super Combo levels to execute a team-up attack, so be very confident that you'll be able to connect with the attack. Often it's better to simply try a standard Super Combo, especially as many of them can be added to the end of combos, increasing their damage potential.

All About Combos

The bread and butter of this game is found in the combo system. Each character can link moves together in such a manner that if the first move hits an unblocking opponent, the rest will also connect before the victim has a chance to recover. Each character has a slightly different pattern that he or she can follow while creating combos, but in general you can always follow weaker attacks with stronger attacks.

- Another element of combos involves the use of Super Moves and Super Combos. Basic moves and Super Moves can be interrupted by triggering a Super Move or a Super Combo, resulting in both the initial move and the newly activated move hitting the victim. The progression for this is as follows:

Regular move ⟵interrupted by⟶
Super Move ⟵interrupted by⟶
Super Combo

- If you're doing a regular move, you can interrupt it with either a Super Move or a Super Combo. If you're doing a Super Move, you can only interrupt it with a Super Combo. This is an ideal way to maximize the amount of damage done to your opponent, and helps to make sure you connect with the powerful Super Combos.

- Another key feature in Marvel Super Heroes vs. Street Fighter are the launchers and the associated Air Combos. Each character has one or more moves that will hurl his or her opponent straight up into the air. If the attacking character immediately taps Up after executing this move, he/she will follow the victim and can launch a combo while that opponent is flying upward through the air, helpless. The air combo must be delivered before the victim starts falling back to earth, though, or he/she will be able to block.

Secret Characters!

- There are at least six secret playable characters in the game. They are accessible at any time, by simply highlighting the appropriate character, holding Select and then pressing any Punch or Kick button. The secret characters, and the characters that must be highlighted to select them, are listed on the right.
- The only really "new" character is Shadow, a version of Charlie from Street Fighter Alpha, who's been brainwashed by Bison. The rest of the characters play pretty much, or exactly, like their counterparts.

To select:	Highlight:
U.S. Agent	Bison
Mech. Zangief	Blackheart
Armored Spider-Man	Spider-Man
Shadow	Dhalsim
Mephisto	Omega Red
Dark Sakura	Hulk

Key

P = Punch
LP = Light
MP = Medium
HP = Heavy

K =Kick
LK = Light
MK = Medium
HK = Heavy

CAPTAIN AMERICA

Super Moves — Captain America

NAME	MOVE	DAMAGE
Shield Slash	↓, ↘, →, P	15
Stars 'n' Stripes	→, ↓, ↘, P	26
Charging Star	↓, ↘, →, K	19
Cartwheel	→, ↘, ↓, ↙, ←, P	–

Best Combos

LP, LK, MK, HP	35	4 hits
LP, LK, ↑, LP, LK, MP, MK, HP	38	7 hits

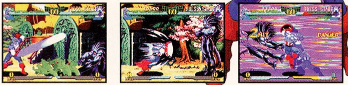
Super Combos

Hyper Charging Star	↓, ↘, →, KK	44
Hyper Stars 'n' Stripes	→, ↓, ↘, PP	44
Final Justice	↓, ↘, →, PP	53

Launcher

MP

Use the shield to harass opponents at a distance, but try to get in close enough to nail them with the **Charging Star (↓, ↘, →, K)** or a good combo. When jumping toward an opponent, use HP to attack as you come in; it has excellent coverage. Captain America can Double Jump; use that to get clear of powerful Super Moves or Super Combos while jumping in on an opponent. Use the **Hyper Charging Star Super Combo (↓, ↘, →, KK)** when you've got the energy and your opponent leaves an opening. If he/she is jumping in, or just missed a close attack, use the **Hyper Stars 'n' Stripes (→, ↓, ↘, PP)**.



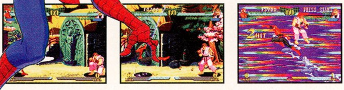
Use Captain America's Heavy Punch when jumping in to an opponent. It's not only quick, but covers a substantial portion of the screen.

U.S. AGENT

U.S. Agent is identical to Captain America.

SPIDER-MAN

With Spider-Man the basic idea is to simply jump around and keep moving. His ability to absorb an opponent's blow ranks among the lowest in the roster, so stay a moving target. Dart in and attack when your opponent has his/her guard down. When at a distance, annoy your opponent with **Web Balls (↓, ↘, →, P)**. Once you're in close, nail him/her with a Web Ball, then combo him/her or unleash the **Maximum Spider Super Combo (↓, ↘, →, PP)**. Use his ability to stick to walls to avoid your opponent's Super Combos.



Use Spider-Man's ability to stun his opponent with a Web Ball to set up his usually difficult-to-connect-with Maximum Spider Super Combo.

Super Moves — Spider-Man

NAME	MOVE	DAMAGE
Web Ball	↓, ↘, →, P	12
Spider Sting	→, ↓, ↘, P	14
Web Swing	↓, ↙, ←, K	26
Web Throw	→, ↘, ↓, ↙, ←, P	19

Best Combos

Web Ball (↓, ↘, →, HP), MP, ↗, LP, LK, MP, MK, HP	40	7 hits
Jumping HK, MP, Spider Sting (→, ↓, ↘, P)	27	5 hits

Super Combos

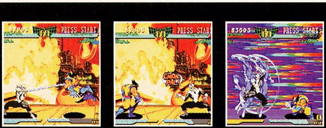
Maximum Spider	↓, ↘, →, PP	48
Crawler Assault	↓, ↘, →, KK	41

Launcher

MP or Crouching HK

ARMORED SPIDER-MAN

Exactly the same as Spider-Man, except with armor. As a result, Armored Spider-Man takes less damage, but is quite a bit slower, and all his attacks do less damage, making him difficult to use. Without Spider-Man's speed, you need to rely more on baiting opponents into coming to you. Throw Web Balls (↓, ↘, →, P) to goad opponents into jumping toward you, then nail them with the Spider Sting (→, ↓, ↘, P). Also, his armor allows him to ignore single hits—so long as they are weak—allowing you to often counterattack through an opponent's attack.



Fighting Apocalypse

Just keep hammering. Get ready to block when you see his gun ports opening, and use your most powerful Super Combo or team-up attack whenever you've got enough power levels. You need to aim for his arm or his head to inflict damage, but everything you connect with will do damage. Use your Super Combos as soon as you have enough power to activate them.

Fighting Cyber Akuma

A very difficult opponent, Cyber Akuma's fast, has overwhelming missile attacks, and does a lot of damage when he hits. Play very defensively against him. If he lands a single blow on you, he'll combo it for heavy damage. It's critically important to take advantage of any openings he leaves to deliver a powerful combo. Build up your Super Combo Meter, then hit him with your longest-reaching attack when he leaves an opening or while he's advancing (often the CPU won't block while advancing).

BLACKHEART

To win with Blackheart, you must capitalize on your opponent's mistakes—and hope he/she makes a lot of them. Stay at a distance and hammer your opponent with **Dark Inferno (→, ↘, ↓, ↙, ←, P** (use HP for best results)**)** while you build up your Super Meter, then unleash **Heart of Darkness (↓, ↘, →, KK)** as soon as he/she leaves an opening. If he/she gets in close, use HK to spawn demons that will paralyze your opponent, then launch him/her and hit him/her with an air combo, or nail him/her with Dark Inferno.

The best way to play with Blackheart (and Mephisto) is to play defensively. Wait for an opening in your opponent's strategy and counter.

Super Moves — Blackheart

NAME	MOVE	DAMAGE
Dark Lightning	←, ↙, ↓, ↘, →, P	13
Dark Inferno	→, ↘, ↓, ↙, ←, P	27

Best Combos

HK, MK	22	6 hits
Crouching MK, MP, ↗, LP, LK, MP, HP	26	6 hits

Super Combos

Judgement Day	↓, ↙, ←, PP	38
Armageddon	↓, ↘, →, PP	40
Heart of Darkness	↓, ↘, →, KK	40

Launcher

MP

MEPHISTO Exactly the same as Blackheart, he simply has additional flame effects with a few of his hits.

ZANGIEF

Super Moves — Zangief

NAME	MOVE	DAMAGE
Body Splash	↓, HP (while jumping)	17
Jumping Grab	→, ↓, ↘, K	22
Green Glove	→, ↓, ↘, P	21
Walking Throw	←, ↙, ↓, ↘, →, K	27
Suplex	←, ↙, ↓, ↘, →, K (throw)	33
Spinning Lariat	PPP	21
Short Spinning Lariat	KKK	17
Spinning Piledriver	360 on joypad, P	34

Best Combos

Body Splash (↓, HP while jumping), ↓,MP, ↑, LP, MP, HP	39	5 hits
Jumping MK, HK, Spinning Clothesline	38	3 hits

Super Combos

Atomic Piledriver	360 on joypad, PP	62

Launcher

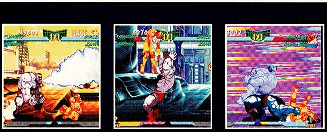
Crouching MP

To get the most out of Zangief, you've got to master the trick of performing a 360-degree motion on the joypad to perform his **Spinning Piledriver**. It's his best Super Move, and the same motion is used for the **Atomic Piledriver**, his only Super Combo. Get close to your opponent and unleash one of these moves to cause some heavy damage. Use his **Body Splash (↓, HP, while jumping)** when jumping in on opponents, and follow it with a combo. When close to an opponent, use his **Walking Throw (←, ↙, ↓, ↘, →, K).** When activated, Zangief will walk through single-hit attacks without being knocked down, allowing him to throw an opponent who's trying to attack him.

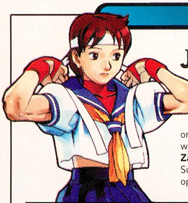
You're not going to achieve any degree of success with Zangief until you learn to master and perform his 360-degree commands at will.

MECHANICAL ZANGIEF

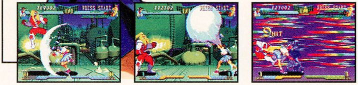
Mechanical Zangief can be played similarly to Zangief, but some adjustments have to be made. Mechanical Zangief is much slower, has some different moves and cannot be knocked down or stunned by any attack your opponent can throw at you. Use the **Flame Breath (↓, ↘, →, P)** on opponents trying to keep their distance, but spend most of your effort trying to get close enough to pull off a **Spinning Piledriver (360 on joypad, P).** With Mechanical Zangief you've got to concentrate on taking your opponent out before he/she takes you out.



SAKURA



Jump around and try to get in close to your opponent to combo him/her. Use the **Hadouken (↓, ↙, ←, P)** to take out opponents who try to jump in on you, and use the **Dragon Charge (↓, ↘, →, P)** to rush a close opponent who's missed with an attack or is activating a missile attack (the charge will go through the missile). The **Midare Zakura (↓, ↘, →, PP)** is her best Super Combo, but use it only when your opponent leaves an opening.



Utilize Sakura's Hadouken as an effective air counterattack. Use her Midare Zakura combo only when there is an opening for it.

Super Moves — Sakura

NAME	MOVE	DAMAGE
Hadouken	↓, ↙, ←, P	20
Dragon Charge	↓, ↘, →, P	23
Senpyu Kyaku	↓, ↙, ←, K	19

Best Combos

Crouching HP, ↗, LP, LK, MP, HP, Dragon Charge (↓,↘,→, P)	32	10 hits
Crouching LK, Haru-Ichiban (↓,↙,←, KK)	48	19 hits

Super Combos

Shinkuu Hadouken	↓, ↙, ←, PP	42
Haru-Ichiban	↓, ↙, ←, KK	42
Midare Zakura	↓, ↘, →, PP	45

Launcher

Crouching HP

DARK SAKURA

Super Moves — Dark Sakura

NAME	MOVE	DAMAGE
Hadouken	↓, ↘, →, P	21
Dragon Punch	→, ↓, ↘, P	23
Teleport	→, ↓, ↘, PPP or KKK	–
Hurricane Kick	↓, ↙, ←, K	19

Best Combos

Crouching HP, ↗, LK, LK, MP, HP, Dragon Punch (→,↓,↘, P)	32	10 hits
LP, MP, Shinkuu Hadouken (↓,↙,←, PP)	45	11 hits

Super Combos

Shinkuu Hadouken	↓, ↘, →, PP	25
Haru-Ichiban	↓, ↙, ←, KK	67
Midare Zakura	↓, ↘, →, PP	66
Shun-Goku-Satsu	LP, LP, →, LK, HP	42

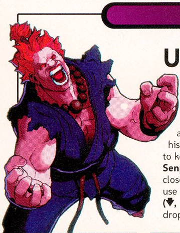
Launcher

Crouching HP

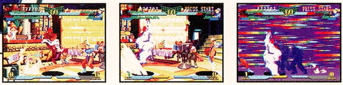
Dark Sakura plays differently than regular Sakura, mainly because she has an effective missile attack to keep opponents away. Plus, a couple of her Super Combos do a heck of a lot more damage. Play pretty much the way you would with Sakura, but use the **Hadouken (↓, ↘, →, HP)** to nail opponents at a distance, and try to connect with the **Haru-Ichiban (↓, ↙, ←, KK)** or **Midare Zakura (↓, ↘, →, PP)** when you've filled your Super Meter. Be more careful up close, as Dark Sakura takes more damage than regular Sakura.

Watch your life bar when playing in close! Dark Sakura takes more damage than her counterpart.

AKUMA



Use ground or air missile attacks to nail opponents from a distance, then jump in and do some combo damage. If your opponent fires a missile attack, counter with the **Messatsu Hadouken (↓, ↙, ←, PP).** Use the same basic strategy as you would with Ryu, but concentrate on staying a little farther away, as Akuma takes more damage than Ryu. Use his ground and air **Messatsu (↓, ↘, →, P)** to keep opponents away, and use **Gou Tatsumaki Senpyuken (↓, ↙, ←, K)** when you get up close. Once you've got Super Levels built up, use Messatsu Hadouken or **Tenma Gou Zankyu (↓, ↘, →, PP, air only)** when your opponent drops his/her guard.



Akuma is still an effective air fireball thrower, so use it to your advantage to keep advancing enemies at bay.

Super Moves — Akuma

NAME	MOVE	DAMAGE
Messatsu	↓, ↘, →, P	15
Gou Retsuken	→, ↓, ↘, P	25
Gou Tatsumaki Senpyuken	↓, ↙, ←, K	23
Demon Blade Kick	↓, ↘, →, K (air only)	9
Teleport	→, ↓, ↘, PPP or KKK	–

Best Combos

Jumping MP, crouch HP, LP, MP, ↓,↘,→, PP	54	17 hits
LP, MP, HP, Gou Tatsumaki Senpyuken (↓,↙,←, K)	40	6 hits

Super Combos

Messatsu Hadouken	↓, ↙, ←, PP	40
Messatsu Gou Shoryuu	↓, ↘, →, PP	35
Tenma Gou Zankyu	↓, ↘, →, PP (air only)	40
Shun-Goku-Satsu	LP, LP, →, LK, HP (level 3 only)	52

Launcher

Crouching HP

BISON

Super Moves — M. Bison

NAME	MOVE	DAMAGE
Psycho Shot	←, ↙, ↓, ↘, →, P	14
Scissors Kick	←, ↙, ↓, ↘, →, K	25
Psycho Palm	charge ↓, ↑, P, P	21
Head Stomp	charge ↓, ↑, K, P	42
Levitation	↓, ↙, ←, KKK (air only)	–
Teleport	→, ↓, ↘, P or K	–

Best Combos

HP, ↗, LK, HP, Scissors Kick (←,↙,↓,↘,→, MK)	41	5 hits
LP, crouching HP, Psycho Crusher (↓,↘,→, PP)	64	9 hits

Super Combos

Psycho Crusher	↓, ↘, →, PP	42
Scissor-Kick Nightmare	↓, ↘, →, KK	50

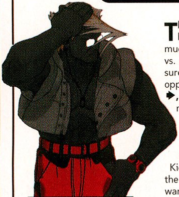
Launcher

HP

A somewhat difficult character to use, Bison requires a lot of practice to be mastered. Use his **Scissors Kick (←, ↙, ↓, ↘, →, K)** while jumping over missile attacks to take the opponent by surprise. Jump around, use the **Head Stomp (charge ↓, ↑, K, P)** and **Psycho Palm (charge ↓, ↑, P, P)** to keep your opponent on his/her toes, and **Teleport (→, ↓, ↘, P or K)** to avoid his/her Super Combos. Use the **Psycho Crusher (↓, ↘, →, PP)** whenever you fill your Super Combo Meter.

Use Bison's Psycho Crusher whenever you have the energy for it, especially before landing from a jump to take opponents by surprise.

SHADOW



This is Charlie, from Street Fighter Alpha, after being corrupted by Bison. He plays pretty much the same as he did there, with some new vs. powerhouse moves thrown in for good measure. Constantly keep the pressure on your opponent by throwing **Sonic Blades (charge ←, →, P)**, then follow them in to attack your opponent from the air or the ground. If you want to play defensively, charge the **Flash Kick (charge ↓, ↑, K)** and be ready for jump-in attacks. By holding ↙ on the joypad, you can charge the Sonic Blade and the Flash Kick at the same time, simply by completing the second two motions of whichever move you want to activate. Use the **Blade Slice (↑, ↗, →, K)** for defense while jumping; you can also use it to hit while jumping in on an opponent. The **Cross Shadow Blitz (↓, ↘, →, KK)** is Shadow's most useful Super Combo—it comes out quickly, hits from a pretty good distance and does heavy damage.

Don't get into a fireball fight using Shadow's Sonic Blades or you'll lose every time. Instead use them to set up a couple quick-hit combos.

Super Moves — Shadow

NAME	MOVE	DAMAGE
Sonic Blade	charge ←, →, P	15
Flash Kick	charge ↓, ↑, K	23
Blade Slice	↑, ↗, →, K (air only)	21

Best Combos

Crouching LK, crouching MK, ↑, K (Flash Kick)	16	3 hits
Crouching HP, ↑, LP, LK, MP, MK, Blade Slice (↑,↗,→, K)	33	6 hits

Super Combos

Shadow Break	↓, ↘, →, PP	34D
Shadow Justice	↓, ↙, ←, KK	35D
Cross Shadow Blitz	↓, ↘, →, KK	46D
Final Mission	charge ←, →, ←, →, PP	55D

Launcher

Crouching HP

CHUN-LI

Super Moves — Chun-Li

NAME	MOVE	DAMAGE
Vertical Spin	→, ↓, ↘, K	24
Mini-Kikosho	←, ↙, ↓, ↘, →, P	14
Kikoken	charge ←, →, P	10
Lightning Kicks	tap K rapidly	19
Head Stomp	↓ + MK while jumping	6
Kikosho	↓, ↘, →, PP	33

Best Combos

LP, MP, HP, Lightning Kicks (↓,↘,→, KK, tap K)	53	22 hits
Jump, Air Dash (→,→), Lightning Kick (tap HK)	30	10 hits

Super Combos

Lightning Kicks	↓, ↘, →, KK (tap K)	45
Hazan Tenkyo Zaku	→, ↓, ↘, KK	53

Launcher

HK

Use her Wall Jump, Triple Air Jump and Air Dash to avoid your opponent's attacks and drop in on him/her when he/she least expects it, then hammer him/her with her **Head Stomp (↓ + MK while jumping)** or a Jumping Kick comboing into a **Lightning Kick (tap K)**. If your opponent meets you in the air, throw him/her or use a Lightning Kick to knock him/her down.

Chun-Li is a refined character in avoiding enemies' attacks with her off-the-wall and triple air jumps

CYCLOPS

Whittle your opponent down with the **Optic Blast (⬇, ⬊, ➡, P),** and nail him/her with **Gene Splice (➡, ⬇, ⬊, P)** if he/she tries to jump in and attack. When you see an opening, dart in and unleash a combo. Cyclops can jump again while in the air, so use that ability to get clear of powerful Super Moves and Super Combos when jumping toward your opponent. Use Cyclops' HP punch to fire quick blasts, then follow them immediately with an Optic Blast for maximum harassment. If you see your foe start to throw a missile attack, use the **Mega Optic Blast (⬇, ⬊, ➡, PP)** to cancel his/her attack and hit him/her for some heavy damage at the same time. The closer you are to your opponent, the more damage the Mega Optic Blast will do. It's also great for nailing someone after you've blocked an up-close attack.

Cyclops' optic blasts are the fastest projectiles in the game. Use his standing HP to set up an unexpected strong Optic Blast.

Super Moves — Cyclops

NAME	MOVE	DAMAGE
Optic Blast	⬇, ⬊, ➡, P	13
Optic Sweep	➡, ⬊, ⬇, P	14
Gene Splice	➡, ⬇, ⬊, P (tap P)	24
Sweep Kick	⬇, ⬋, ⬅, K	28
Rushing Grab	charge ⬅, ➡, K	27
Combo Punch	charge ⬅, ➡, P (tap P)	33

Best Combos

LP, LK, MK, Sweep Kick (⬇, ⬋, ⬅, K)	34	5 hits
LP, HK, Optic Array (➡, ⬊, ⬇, ⬋, ⬅, PP)	50	9 hits

Super Combos

Mega Optic Blast	⬇, ⬊, ➡, PP	45
Optic Array	➡, ⬊, ⬇, ⬋, ⬅, PP	35

Launcher

MP

DAN

Super Moves — Dan

NAME	MOVE	DAMAGE
Gadoken	⬇, ⬊, ➡, P	15
Kouryuken	➡, ⬇, ⬊, P	23
Autograph	⬅, ⬋, ⬇, ⬊, ➡, K	4
Tornado Kick	⬇, ⬋, ⬅, K	22
Rolling Taunt	⬇, ⬊, ➡, select or ⬇, ⬋, ⬅	–

Best Combos

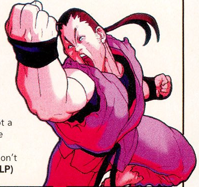
Crouching HP, LP, LK, MP, HP	22	5 hits
HP, Tornado Kick (⬇,⬋,⬅, HK)	36	4 hits

Super Combos

Kouryuu Gadoken	⬇, ⬊, ➡, PP	49
Kouryuu Reppa	⬇, ⬊, ➡, KK	40
Hissho Murai Ken	⬇, ⬋, ⬅, KK	49

Launcher

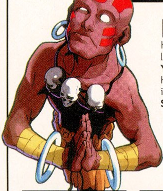
Crouching HP



A joke character who requires an extreme amount of skill to win with, Dan doesn't have any strengths, so you basically have to hope your opponent makes mistakes you can exploit. The **Tornado Kick (⬇, ⬋, ⬅, K)** is really his only offensive weapon, and the **Kouryuken (➡, ⬇, ⬊, P)** provides some defense against opponents jumping in. When you've got a Super Combo level ready to go, use the **Kouryuu Gadoken (⬇, ⬊, ➡, PP)** after getting close to your opponent. Don't use the **Otoko-Michi (MP, LK, ⬅, LP, LP)** unless your opponent has only a tiny amount of life left (less than 20 points) and you're right on top of him/her, as it leaves Dan with practically no life.

Avoid using Dan's Otoko-Michi unless your opponent is nearly defeated and you're in relatively close range.

DHALSIM



Primarily a defensive character, Dhalsim lacks the combos to be used well offensively. Hang back and hammer your opponent with his long-reaching attacks, then nail him/her with a **Yoga Blast (➡, ⬊, ⬇, ⬋, ⬅, HK)** as he/she tries to jump in on you. If your opponent is close and throws a missile, use Dhalsim's **Sliding Attack (⬇ + K)** to go underneath and attack. When jumping in, use the **Yoga Drill (⬇ + K)** or **Yoga Mummy (⬇ + HP).** For Super Combos, use the **Yoga Inferno (⬇, ⬊, ➡, PP).** You can aim it with the joypad to take out jumping opponents, or just leave it alone to hit an opponent on the ground.

Dhalsim returns as a defensive fighter. Use his long-range Yoga Flame not only as a counterattack, but to keep opponents away.

Super Moves — Dhalsim

NAME	MOVE	DAMAGE
Yoga Fire	⬇, ⬊, ➡, P	17
Yoga Flame	⬅, ⬋, ⬇, ⬊, ➡, P	19
Yoga Blast	➡, ⬊, ⬇, ⬋, ⬅, K	17
Yoga Mummy	⬇+HP (air only)	9
Yoga Drill	⬇+ K (air only)	6
Levitation	⬇, ⬋, ⬅, KKK (air only)	–
Teleport	⬅, ⬇, ⬋, PPP or KKK	–

Best Combos

MP, ⬆, LP, LK, HP	13	4 hits
Yoga Fire (⬇,⬊,➡, LP), HK as Yoga Fire hits opponent	28	2 hits

Super Combos

Yoga Inferno	⬇, ⬊, ➡, PP	45
Yoga Strike	⬇, ⬊, ➡, KK	48

Launcher

MP

HULK

Super Moves — Hulk

NAME	MOVE	DAMAGE
Ground Wave	⬇, ⬊, ➡, P	25
Spinning Throw	➡, ⬊, ⬇, ⬋, ⬅, P (close)	30
Gamma Charge (horiz.)	charge ⬅, ➡, K, any direction, K	40
Gamma Charge (vert.)	charge ⬇, ⬆, K, any direction, K	34

Best Combos

Jumping HK, LP, HP	38	3 hits
⬇HP, Gamma Charge (charge ⬇,⬆, K)	39	3 hits

Super Combos

Gamma Wave	⬇, ⬊, ➡, PP	66
Gamma Crush	⬇, ⬋, ⬅, PP (aim with ⬅ + ➡)	40

Launchers

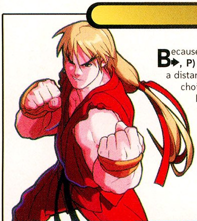
HK or Crouching HP

Get in close and do some damage! Hulk can ignore single-hit attacks, allowing him to attack through an opponent's attack, which makes him hard to stop once he gets in close. Jumping in on your opponent works better than dashing, and don't forget you can hit from a distance with the **Ground Wave (⬇, ⬊, ➡, P)** if your opponent tries to keep out of reach. Once you get in close, start a combo; your opponent will have to hit Hulk twice before he/she can stop it. Use the **Spinning Throw (➡, ⬊, ⬇, ⬋, ⬅, P)** when you're right on top of your opponent. Use the **Gamma Wave Super Combo (⬇, ⬊, ➡, PP)** when you've got the energy for it; if your opponent is right on top of you, he/she will take more damage.

2HIT
GAMMA WAVE

Jumping in on your opponent works better than dashing when playing as Hulk, but you can still attack from a distance with his Ground Wave.

KEN



Because of his weak **Hadouken (⬇, ⬊, ➡, P)** attacks, Ken can't keep opponents at a distance as well as Ryu, so he's got no choice but to get in close and combo. Use his **Shoryuken (➡, ⬇, ⬊, P)** to take out jumpers or to punish an opponent who misses an attack; it's got a terrific range, so you can often surprise opponents with it. For a Super Combo, use **Shoryu Reppa (⬇, ⬊, ➡, PP)** because of its reach.

PRESS START
GOOD
4HIT

If you can get close enough to an opponent with your meter maxed, use Ken's Shinryuken while tapping K for devastating damage.

Super Moves — Ken

NAME	MOVE	DAMAGE
Hadouken	⬇, ⬊, ➡, P	15
Shoryuken	➡, ⬇, ⬊, P	26
Tatsumaki Senpyu Kyaku	⬇, ⬋, ⬅, K	25

Best Combos

LP, MP, HP, Shoryu Reppa (⬇,⬊,➡, PP)	60	24 hits

Super Combos

Shoryu Reppa	⬇, ⬊, ➡, PP	40
Shinryuken	⬇, ⬊, ➡, KK	58
Shippu-Jinrai-Kyaku	⬇, ⬋, ⬅, KK	48

Launcher

Crouching HP

OMEGA RED

Super Moves — Omega Red

NAME	MOVE	DAMAGE
Carbonadium Coil	⬇, ⬊, ➡, P (K in air), tap P or K	15
Omega Strike	⬇, ⬊, ➡, K (MP+K to cancel)	21
Coil Slam	any direction +P after Coil	18

Best Combos

LP, Crouching MP, HP, Omega Strike (⬇, ⬊, ➡, LK)	45	4 hits
Jumping MK, LK, MK, HK, Omega Strike (⬇, ⬊, ➡, LK)	40	5 hits

Super Combos

Omega Destroyer	⬇, ⬊, ➡, PP	59
Carbonadium Smash	⬇, ⬊, ➡, PP (only while in air)	29

Launcher

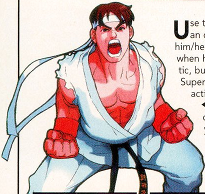
MP

Best used at a medium distance from your opponent, Omega Red has decent reach with his HP, HK and Super Moves, so take advantage of this range. Try to hit your opponent with a **Carbonadium Coil (⬇, ⬊, ➡, P, tap P)** if he/she misses an attack, or if he/she launches a missile. Once you've grabbed him/her, his/her missile will pass through Omega Red harmlessly. Use the **Omega Destroyer (⬇, ⬊, ➡, PP)** when your opponent has left a clear opening, or he/she will just block it.

PRESS START
2HIT
DANGER

Like Dhalsim, Omega Red has excellent attack range but is relatively slow and ineffective in close combat.

RYU



Use the **Hadouken (⬇, ⬊, ➡, P)** to keep an opponent at a distance, then nail him/her with a **Shoryuken (➡, ⬇, ⬊, P)** when he/she tries to jump in. It's an old tactic, but it still works. Once you've got some Super Levels built up, try to get close and activate the **Shinkuu Hurricane (⬇, ⬋, ⬅, KK)** for maximum damage. If your opponent launches a missile while you've got super levels, nail him/her with the **Shinkuu Hadouken (⬇, ⬊, ➡, PP)**; it'll cancel the incoming attack and damage your opponent.

Try to sucker possible fireballers with Ryu's Shinkuu Hadouken Super Combo. If done right it will nail them before they can recover.

Super Moves
Ryu

NAME	MOVE	DAMAGE
Hadouken	⬇, ⬊, ➡, P	15
Shoryuken	➡, ⬇, ⬊, P	21
Tatsumaki Senpyu Kyaku	⬇, ⬋, ⬅, K	29

Best Combos

LP, MP, HP, Hadouken (⬇,⬊,➡, P)	36	4 hits
Jumping HK, crouching HP, ⬈,LP, MP, Shinkuu Hadouken	56	20 hits

Super Combos

Shinkuu Hadouken	⬇, ⬊, ➡, PP	45
Shin Shoryuken	➡, ⬇, ⬊, PP	44
Shinkuu Hurricane	⬇, ⬋, ⬅, KK	48

Launcher

Crouching HP

SHUMA GORATH

Super Moves
Shuma Gorath

NAME	MOVE	DAMAGE
Devitalization	➡, ⬊, ⬇, ⬋, ⬅, K	20
Mystic Stare	charge ⬅, ➡, P	36
Mystic Smash	charge ⬅, ➡, K	16
Regeneration	⬅ or ➡, MK or HK	15

Best Combos

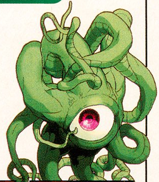
Jumping HK, MK, ⬆, LP, MP, MK	26	6 hits
Jumping HK, crouching LP, crouching HK	25	3 hits

Super Combos

The Spawning	⬇, ⬊, ➡, KK	–
Chaos Dimension	⬅,⬋,⬇,⬊,➡, PP (3 SC levels), P	63

Launcher

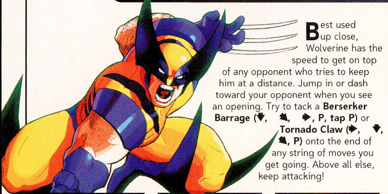
MK



Shuma Gorath is very difficult to use, due to his poor combo abilities. Concentrate on hitting your opponent with his long-reaching attacks, then throwing him/her with **Regeneration (⬅ or ➡, MK or HK)** when he/she gets close. His Mystic Stare is very useful, both for the damage it does and the combo potential it gives you. Try to hit your victim with HK as the eyes explode to really rack up the hits and damage. While charging a Mystic Stare, if your opponent advances or jumps, try to hit him/her with a **Mystic Smash (charge ⬅, ➡, K)**. Don't waste your Super Meter on anything except the **Chaos Dimension**, and try to activate it when right next to your opponent to ensure you can catch him/her.

While charging up Shuma Gorath's Mystic Stare, if your enemy advances or jumps, try to nail him/her with a Mystic Smash instead.

WOLVERINE



Best used up close, Wolverine has the speed to get on top of any opponent who tries to keep him at a distance. Jump in or dash toward your opponent when you see an opening. Try to tack a **Berserker Barrage (⬇, ⬊, ➡, P, tap P)** or **Tornado Claw (➡, ⬇, ⬊, P)** onto the end of any string of moves you get going. Above all else, keep attacking!

Wolverine has some of the easiest Air Rave combos in the game. Launch your foe with HK, then jump and hit LP, LK, MP, MK and HP.

Super Moves
Wolverine

NAME	MOVE	DAMAGE
Berserker Barrage	⬇, ⬊, ➡, P (tap P)	28
Tornado Claw	➡, ⬇, ⬊, P	22
Drill Claw	MP+LK+any direction	21
Head Stomp	⬇+HK while in air	8

Best Combos

LP, MP, crouching HP, Berserker Barrage, Berserker Barrage X	69	26 hits
HK, ⬆, LP, LK, MP, MK, HP	25	6 hits

Super Combos

Weapon X	➡, ⬇, ⬊, PP	54
Fatal Claw	➡, ⬇, ⬊, KK	42
Berserker Rage	⬇, ⬋, ⬅, PP	–
Berserker Barrage X	⬇, ⬊, ➡, PP	45

Launcher

Standing HK

Archive Tricks

Asteroids

Cool Codes

On the Title Screen when "Press Start" is flashing, press and hold the Select button and press the following buttons in this order for the results as shown:

Unlock Classic Asteroids - Circle, Circle, Circle, Triangle, Square, Square, Circle
Unlock the Fourth Ship - Triangle, Circle, Circle, Triangle, Square, Circle, Square
Level Select - Square, Triangle, Circle, Triangle, Triangle, Square, Circle. Once you are in a game, you can change levels and zones and turn the collision off by simultaneously pressing Select+Start. Then choose the option you want and press L1 to activate that cheat.

Classic Asteroids Codes

The following codes will work once you pause in the middle of the classic Asteroids game.

Add One Life - Up, Down, Left, Right, Circle, Square, X, Triangle
99 Lives - Up, X, Down, Triangle, Left, Square, Right, Circle
Invincibility - Down, Down, Up, Up, Circle, Square, Triangle, Triangle

Bust A Groove

Secret Moves

Perform these moves **in order** during your dancer's "solo" to score big points.

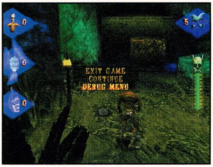
HEAT:
Up, Down, Up, Circle
Down, Up, Down, X
Right, Left, Right, Circle
Down, Up, Down, Circle
FRIDA:
Up, Down, Up, Circle
Right, Left, Right, X
Down, Left, Up, Circle
Up, Right, Down, X
STRIKE SIM:
Up, Up, Left, Circle
Left, Left, Right, Circle
Right, Left, Left, Up, Circle
Left, Up, Down, Right, X
HAMM & BURGER DOG:
Down, Right, Up, Circle
Up, Left, Down, X
Up, Right, Up, Circle
Down, Left, Down, Circle
KELLY:
Right, Left, Right, Circle
Right, Left, Left, Circle
Left, Right, Left, X
Left, Up, Right, Circle
SHORTY & COLUMBO:
Down, Down, Down, Circle
Left, Right, Up, X
Up, Up, Down, X
Up, Down, Left, Right, Circle

Akuji the Heartless

Debug Mode and Invincibility

Debug Mode

Press Start to pause the game, then hold L2 or R2 and press Left, Up, Up, Triangle, Right, Square, Left, Triangle, Up, Down, Right, Right. Then press X for the Debug Menu to appear. You can choose many options, including your starting level!



Invincibility

Press Start to pause the game, then hold L2 or R2 and press Right, Right, Left, Triangle, X, Up, Circle, Left. Akuji will be invulnerable to all hits.

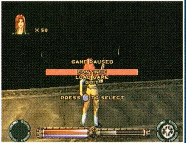
When the invincibility code has been entered, Akuji will be unstoppable.

O.D.T.

Many Cool Codes

Press Start to pause the game in the middle of play and enter these codes for the results shown:

Fill Health
Left, Right, Left, Right, Square
Fill Mana
Left, Right, Left, Right, Circle
Fill Ammo
Left, Right, Up, Down, Circle, Square
Power-Up Weapons
R1, L1, R2, L2, Left, Right, Up, Down
Raise Abilities
Square, Circle, Triangle, Select, Left
Fill Experience
Circle, Square, L1, L2, R1, Select
Turn Off Monster Energy
Triangle, Square, Circle, Triangle, Circle
50 Lives
Triangle, Up, Circle, Right, Select, Square
Raise Level for Each Spell
Down, Triangle, Select, L1, R1, Select



X 50
GAME PAUSED
CONTINUE
LOAD GAME
QUIT
PRESS TO SELECT

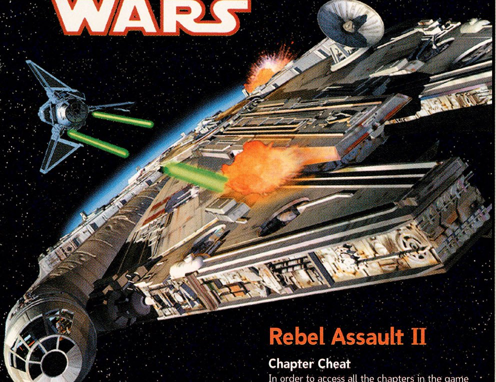
Enter a variety of codes, including Fill Ammo, to enhance the game while playing O.D.T.

Do you have a trick that you, and only you, know? Don't hold back—write us at:

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine
P.O. Box 3338
Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338

Sorry, we cannot respond to individual letters asking for codes or tricks.

STAR WARS Trick Flashback



Star War: Masters of Teräs Käsi

Many Cheats and Hidden Characters

The following tricks are to be done during the Character Loading Screen and can be done in the Versus and Practice Modes only.

Big Head - Hold the Select button during loading.
Super Deformed - Hold the Select, Down and X keys during loading.
Tiny Mode - Hold Select, Down, X and R2 buttons during loading.

The following characters or arena select features can only be unlocked if "Player Change at Continue" in the Options Menu is set to "No," which is the default setting.
Unlock Darth Vader - Play through Arcade Mode with Luke Skywalker on "Standard" or "Jedi" difficulty.
Unlock Stormtrooper - Play through Arcade Mode with Han Solo on "Standard" or "Jedi."
Unlock Jodo Kast - Play through and win against seven or more characters in "Survival Mode."
Unlock Slave Leia - Play through Arcade Mode with Princess Leia on "Jedi" difficulty.
Unlock Mara Jade - Hold the L1, L2 and R1 buttons as you enter Team Mode on "Jedi" difficulty. After the computer selects the characters, you will see "Battle for Mara Jade." Win and she will be released.
Unlock the Ability to Select Arenas - (Practice and Arcade only) Play through Arcade Mode with Chewbacca on "Standard" or "Jedi" difficulty.

Rebel Assault II

Chapter Cheat

In order to access all the chapters in the game just go into Options and then into the Password Screen and enter this password: X, Square, X, X, X, Triangle. Then when you go into the Chapter Select Screen you will be able to select all the chapters in the game, including the finale! Choose your chapter and begin playing!

Dark Forces

Cheat Menu and Level Passwords

In order to access the Cheat Menu, begin your game. During play, enter the code: Left, Circle, X, Right, Circle, X, Down, Circle, X. If done correctly, the Cheat Menu should appear. Now, select the options you wish to use in your game by turning them green. For Level Skip, select the Game Won Option and then exit the menu and pause within the game. A new menu should appear with the option to advance to your Next Mission. The Level Passcodes are as follows:

Level 2- Y7B5T7S183; **Level 3**- 3WKKVMKHWZ; **Level 4**- 9WJHBLCN00; **Level 5**- 8XKGBKDPZ1; **Level 6**- 7YBKBJFL22; **Level 7**- Y7C4L7Q193; **Level 8**- X8D3L6R2C4; **Level 9**- W9F635SZB5; **Level 10**- V!Q534T0F6; **Level 11**- NVHL4LFQ1R; **Level 12**- MYGM!KBR2S; **Level 13**- LXFN4JCSZT; **Level 14**- 205F6HJT0V

PRESS START
∞
PRINCESS LEIA!
LUKE SKYWALKER

HIRO:
Right, Up, Down, Circle
Up, Left, Right, X
Left, Left, Down, Circle
Right, Right, Up, X
PINKY:
Up, Left, Up, Circle
Right, Left, Down, Circle
Up, Down, Right, X
Left, Right, Down, X
GAS-O:
Left, Down, Right, Up, Circle
Up, Left, Down, Right, X
Right, Down, Left, Up, X
Down, Right, Up, Left, Circle
KITTY-N:
Down, Down, Right, Circle
Up, Right, Right, Up, X
Right, Up, Left, Down, X
Left, Right, Up, Left, Down, Circle
CAPOEIRA:
Right, Up, Right, X
Left, Down, Left, Up, X
Right, Up, Right, Left, Circle
Down, Up, Left, Down, Circle
ROBO-Z:
Up, Down, Left, Right, Circle
Up, Left, Down, Right, X
Down, Up, Down, Up, Circle
Down, Down, Right, Left, Left, Circle

Bust-A-Move 4

Another World

You'll get an entirely new set of levels when you enter this code. At the Title Screen, press Triangle, Left, Right, Left, Triangle. You will hear a sound and see a little green spinning icon in the lower-right corner of the screen to confirm that it worked. From the Game Menu, choose Puzzle and then pick Arcade. Choose your difficulty level and then you'll be able to play a plethora of new stages!

Colony Wars: Vengeance

Password Cheats

Here are some password cheats for CW:V (all are case-sensitive):
Invincibility: Vampire
All weapons: Tornado
Primary weapons available: Dark Angel
Infinite secondary weapons: Chimera
Infinite afterburners: Avalanche
Infinite money: Hydra
All ships: Thunderchild
FMV and mission select: Demon
All missions, all ships, infinite secondary weapons, etc.: Blizzard
Disable Cheats: Stormlord

Contender

Main Event Characters in Two-Player Mode

Start a new boxer in the Main Event. Pick one of the boxers and immediately save him to your memory card. Exit, then repeat with another character. When you have saved each boxer start a two-player match. At the Character Select Screen

Archive Tricks

press Square to pick one of the other boxers from your memory card.

Crash Bandicoot: WARPED

Free Apples

When you are playing a level that has the rock-throwing monkeys, after you have destroyed the vases that they occupy you can jump on the monkeys and get free apples.

Marvel Super Heroes vs. Street Fighter

Hidden Characters

These characters can be used in any mode of the game.

For Armored Spider-Man:
Highlight Spider-Man, hold Select and press any button.
For Dark Sakura:
Highlight Hulk, hold Select and press any button.
For Mephisto:
Highlight Omega Red, hold Select and press any button.
For Shadow:
Highlight Dhalsim, hold Select and press any button.
For Dark Zangief:
Highlight Blackheart, hold Select and press any button.
For U.S. Agent:
Highlight M.Bison, hold Select and press any button.

Moto Racer 2

Cool Cycle Codes

Faster Bikes:
Press Up (3x), Right, Left, Triangle, X at the Main Menu.
Higher Jumps:
Press Left (2x), Up (2x), Right (2x), Down (2x), Square, Triangle, X at the Main Menu.
Other Racers Limited to 50 km/h:
Press Circle, Square, Right, Left, L1, R1, X at the Main Menu.

NFL Blitz

Blitz Cheats

These codes worked on the arcade, and now they also work for the PlayStation version! Enter the following codes during the Vs. Screen. Some codes may not work in one-player games and some two-player codes may require both players to enter the code.

For No CPU Assist press: Jump (1x), Pass (2x) and pad Down. (Note: Only works in Two-player Mode.)
To Show More Field press: Jump (2x), Pass (1x)

Eliminator

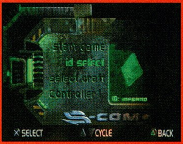
Various Cheats

Enter these cheats from within the ID Selection Screen in the menu.

Secret Level - Cheat word "WAKYLEVL". When the secret level is activated all other cheats should be canceled. The player must shoot the Bonus Pod and reach the end of the level to progress to the next level. If you haven't killed the pod when it gets to the end of the level, the game will be over. The player must reach the end of the Secret Bonus Level to reach the Secret Boss Level.

Invulnerability - Cheat word "CLEVAL-AD". When Invulnerability is flagged the player will not take any damage. (Do not have the shield effect on when using this cheat.)

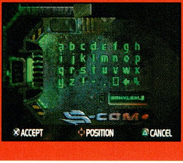
Max Primary Weapons - Cheat word "GUNCRAZY". When the Maximum Primary Weapons cheat is activated, all primary weapons will be at full strength.

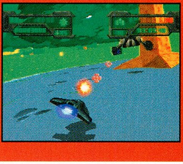


Max Secondary Weapons - Cheat word "MAXMEOUT". When the Maximum Secondary Weapons cheat is activated, all secondary weapons should have an ammo limit of 99.

Cadillac Car - Cheat word "NEWWEELS". When the cheat car is flagged, an extra car is added to the in-game "ship select" screen. The player can now choose Caddi, which will be set up with the best setting a ship can have.

Max Out Time - Cheat word "WAIT-ABIT". On collection of each time pickup, you will be given 10 minutes, regardless of what time the pickups actually show.



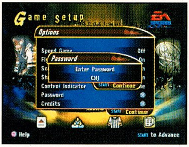


NHL 99

View Arenas

Enter these passwords to do a "flyby" of the following stadiums:

ANA: Arrowhead Pond of Anaheim (Anaheim)
BOS: FleetCenter (Boston)
BUF: Marine Midland Arena (Buffalo)
CGY: Canadian Airlines Saddledome (Calgary)
CAR: Greensboro Coliseum (Carolina)
CHI: United Center (Chicago)
COL: McNichols Sports Arena (Colorado)
DAL: Reunion Arena (Dallas)
DET: Joe Louis Arena (Detroit)
EDM: Edmonton Coliseum (Edmonton)



FLO: Miami Arena (Florida)
LOS: Great Western Forum (Los Angeles)
MON: Molson Center (Montreal)
NAS or NSH: Nashville Arena (Nashville)
NYI: Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum (New York Islanders)

NYR: Madison Square Garden (New York Rangers)
OTT: Corel Center (Ottawa)
PHI: CoreState Center (Philadelphia)
PHO: America West Arena (Phoenix)
PIT: Civic Arena (Pittsburgh)
STL: Kiel Center (St. Louis)
TOR: Maple Leaf Gardens (Toronto)
VAN: GM Place (Vancouver)
WAS: MCI Center (Washington)

and pad Right.
For Fog On press: Jump (3x) and pad Down.
For Fast Turbo Running press: Jump (3x), Pass (2x) and pad Left.
For Huge Head press: Jump (4x) and pad Up.
For Thick Fog press: Jump (4x), Pass (1x) and pad Down.
For Super Blitzing press: Jump (4x), Pass (5x) and pad Up.
For Big Ball press: Jump (5x) and pad Right.
To Hide Receiver Name press: Turbo (1x), Pass (2x) and pad Right.
For Tournament Mode press: Turbo (1x), Jump (1x), Pass (1x) and pad Down.
For Random Play Choice press: Turbo (1x), Jump (1x), Pass (5x) and pad Left.
For Super Field Goals press: Turbo (1x), Jump (2x), Pass (3x) and pad Left.
For Big Players press: Turbo (1x), Jump (4x), Pass (1x) and pad Right.

Ninja: Shadow of Darkness

Invincibility and Level Select

Invincibility
Pause the game at any time and press L2, R2, L2 3 times, R2 3 times, then Circle, Triangle, Square, Circle, Triangle and Square. Listen for a chime to verify that you entered the code correctly. When you unpause, you'll now be a skeleton with infinite lives, energy, smoke bombs, magic potions and full scroll power! To revert back to a ninja, simply pause and re-enter the code. However, when you do, you'll get to keep all the maxed-out items you got when you were the skeleton!

Level Select
Remove your memory card and turn on the PlayStation. When the screen says "Checking Memory Card" quickly press L2, L2, L2, R2, R2, R2. The words "DELS LEVEL CHEAT ON" will briefly appear. Start a new game and you'll access the Level Select menu.

Oddworld: Abe's Exoddus

Cool Codes

Level Select:
At the main menu hold R1, then press Down, Up, Left, Right, Triangle, Square, Circle, Triangle, Square, Circle, Down, Up, Left, Right.

View all FMVs:
At the main menu hold R1, then press Up, Down, Left, Right, Square, Circle, Triangle, Circle, Square, Circle, Up, Down, Left, Right.

Invincibility:
While playing a game, hold R1, then press Circle, Triangle, Square, X, Down, Down, Down, Circle, Triangle, Square, X.

R-Types

Game Cheats

Level Select:
Highlight either the "R-Type" or "R-Type II" option at the Title Screen. Quickly press L2 (10x), R2 (10x). Begin gameplay and press Start to access the Stage Select and FMV sequences within the Menu options. Choose your stage and then press X to begin.
Slow Down Ship:
Pause game, hold L2 and press Right, Up, Right, Up, Down, Left, Down, Left, X.
Speed Up Ship:
Pause game, hold L2 and press Right, Up, Right, Up, Down, Left, Down, Left, Circle.

Rogue Trip

Cheat Codes

To make any of these cheats work, you must first enter the Enable Cheats code while in the middle of a game. Then put in one of the other codes as shown:
Enable Cheats:
Press L1+R1+R2+Select at same time when you first start the level.
Invulnerable:
Press L1+R1 at same time, then press Up, Down, Left, Right
Hornet's Nest:
While stingers are selected, press Triangle+L2+L1+R1+Left. Hold these buttons until you see the text confirmation that it worked.
Blow Up Earth:
Lay an upgraded lob bomb in the back corner within 100 feet of the UFO wreck. Transport up to the moon, then detonate the bomb. Debris from Earth will pummel the moon. Eventually you'll be in weightlessness. It ruins the game, but it's fun!

Tomb Raider III

Incredible Cheats

In the middle of the game, without pausing enter any of these cheats as shown:
All Weapons: L2, R2, R2, L2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, R2, R2, L2, R2, R2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2, R2. You will hear a scream.
Fill Energy: R2, R2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, L2, L2. You will hear Lara grunt.
Level Skip: L2, R2, L2, L2, R2, L2, R2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, R2, R2, R2, R2, L2. Lara says "No."
All Secrets (access All Hallows): L2, L2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, R2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2. Lara will sigh.
Get Race Key at Laura's House: R2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2. Laura says, "No."

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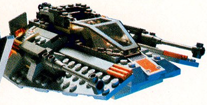
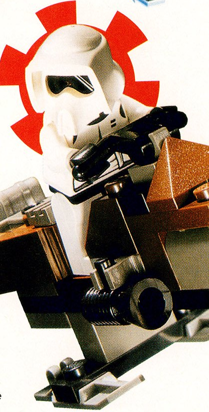
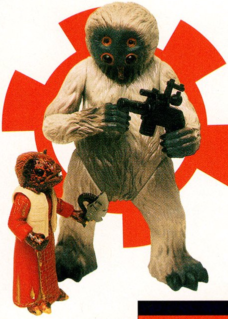


Build Your Own

Since it's not likely we'll ever pilot an X-Wing Fighter, we figured the next best thing would be to actually build one. That'll soon become possible, thanks to these **Lego Star Wars kits**. Here's a sneak peek at the five Star Wars Classic construction sets, which range from the 47-piece Landspeeder ($5.99) to the 407-piece TIE Fighter and Y-Wing set ($49.99). Lego will also be releasing eight Episode I sets around the same time the movie comes out. There are no plans yet for a Death Star kit, but that's surely high on everyone's wish lists.

Lego (prices vary, depending on the set)



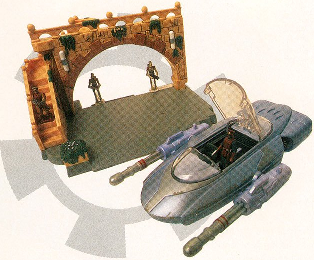


Tatooine Two

Who are **Muftak and Kabe**? Well, other than being a pair of thieves who made an appearance in the first Star Wars film, they're also nifty action figures that you can't find anywhere in stores. Head over to STARWARS.HASBRO.COM and be the first one on your block to own a set of these Internet-exclusive toys.

Hasbro $13.99 ○○○○

⚙⚙⚙⚙⚙ 5G No question, this should be in your home
⚙⚙⚙⚙ 4G Recommended, very cool
⚙⚙⚙ 3G Pretty good, check it out
⚙⚙ 2G Below average
⚙ 1G Very lame



Small Star

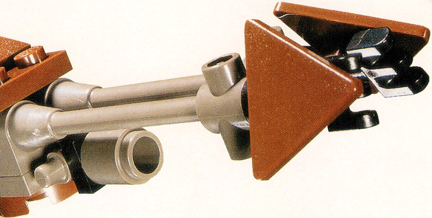
Nobody would ever accuse Battle Droids of being cute—at least not until they see the 3 millimeter figures packed in with this Star Wars Episode I **Gian Speeder & Theed Palace action set**. Along with the diminutive droids are Capt. Panaka and a Naboo Foot Soldier, plus a Gian Speeder with missiles that actually fire.

Galoob approx. $20 ⚙⚙⚙

Muttering Mace

Remember when the only way to get your action figures to talk was by pulling a string in the middle of their backs? Well, Hasbro will be introducing in May a line of Episode I toys with a COMMTech chip built in to their stands. The chip will allow the figures to recognize and interact with each other and even re-enact scenes from *Phantom Menace*. Set these figures atop a COMMTech Reader (pictured at left, with Mace Windu on top) and listen as they jabber away.

Hasbro (price TBA)

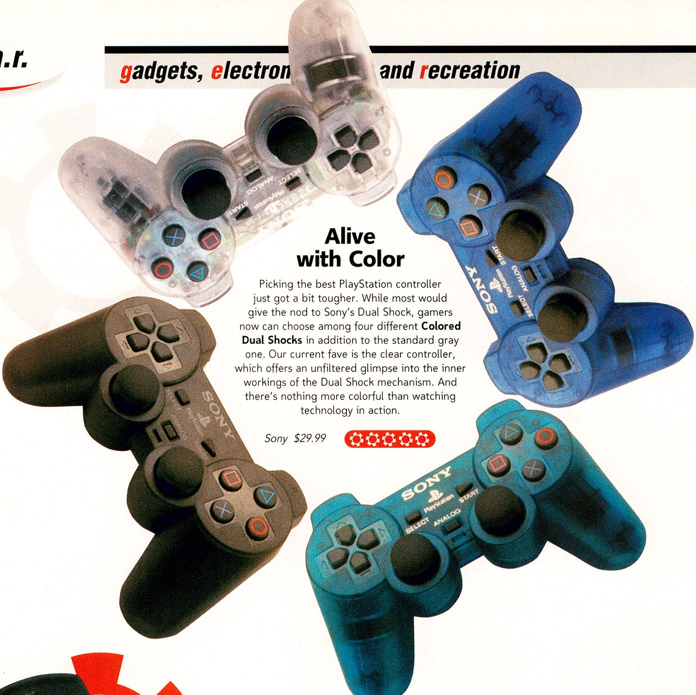


STAR WARS
FLASHBACK PHOTO
C-3PO
STAR WARS
FLASHBACK PHOTO
C-3PO
STAR WARS
FLASHBACK PHOTO
C-3PO

Flashers

These may not be the best Star Wars figures out there, but they certainly satisfy some of our appetite for *any* Episode I product—at least until the flurry of new stuff is unleashed. Each **Power of the Force** figure comes with a **FlashBack Photo card** showing an "after/before" image, like the two faces of C-3PO, shown on the right.

Hasbro $6.99 ⚙⚙⚙



Alive with Color

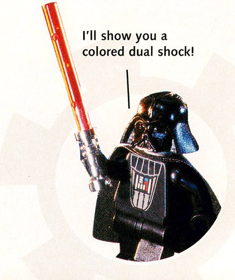
Picking the best PlayStation controller just got a bit tougher. While most would give the nod to Sony's Dual Shock, gamers now can choose among four different **Colored Dual Shocks** in addition to the standard gray one. Our current fave is the clear controller, which offers an unfiltered glimpse into the inner workings of the Dual Shock mechanism. And there's nothing more colorful than watching technology in action.

Sony $29.99 ⚙⚙⚙⚙⚙

Crash Minigame

Hey, check this out: One of the world's most popular video game characters is now starring in his own...handheld video game. With scrolling dot matrix graphics, the ability to connect two systems for mutiplayer action, and a link cable to upload high scores and download codes from a dedicated Web site, the **Crash Bandicoot 99X game** offers more depth than the standard single-title handheld—but that's countered by its relatively high price.

Tiger $29.99 ⚙⚙⚙



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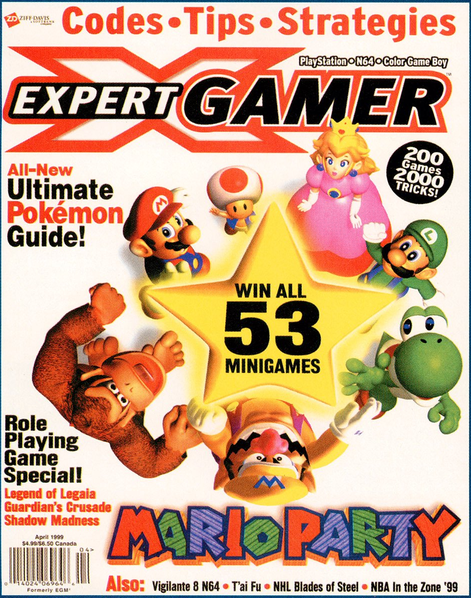

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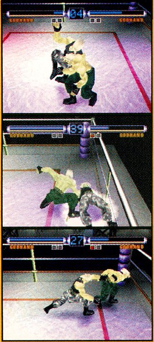
Ehrgeiz

Players	1-2	**Developer**	DreamFactory
Availability	May	**Publisher**	Square EA
Analog Compatible	Yes	**Genre**	Fighting

✕ Kick
○ Projectile Weapon
□ Jab
△ Punch
L1 Jump
L2 Jump
R1 Block
R2 Block

Grasping Attacks



To reach out and grab your opponent (assuming he is within range), tap both high and low attacks while guarding. Once you are holding him, what comes next is up to you. You can do nothing, which will execute one of several different throws; tap H or L repeatedly for a series of beatings; or (our personal favorite) push the D-pad in the direction of the closest wall or object to slam your opponent into it. Ooof! If you grapple your opponent as you are running at him (G+H+L while running), you can hold him down and dish out some serious hurt with multiple H or L attacks, then toss him over. There are also different throws depending on where you grab your opponent (like from behind), so try 'em all.

What is it?

A free-roaming 60fps silky-smooth all-out brawl from the same people who brought you Tobal No. 1 and 2. For the demo you can try out the standard fighting mode alone (against three computer opponents) or with two players, with only one playable character available for either—Godhand.

What to expect in the full game:

Eight main characters and six secret characters (including Sephiroth, Yuffie, Tifa and Vincent from Final Fantasy VII), minigames galore (Othello-like puzzle game, several track-and-field style footraces), and an extensive action/RPG-esque Quest Mode, complete with a town, swords, shields, monsters, bosses and a randomly generated dungeon to explore.

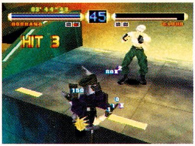
Our Advice:

There is a lot more to Ehrgeiz than first meets the eye. This is no ordinary fighting game, so don't treat it like one. Run and jump around the environment a bit. Get a feel for blocking and long-range fighting via the Special Weapon attack. Once you get used to the controls you can really pull off some amazing-looking combos, so be patient and practice. Check out our moves lists and keep a close eye on the action—when characters turn blue it means their back is turned to their opponent and they can't defend.

On the other hand, when characters turn red they are powered up and their attacks cannot be blocked.

OPM psychic sez:

"Probably the best-looking fighter for the PlayStation, and all the extra modes in the final version are great (especially the Quest Mode), but the Special Weapons are too powerful!"



Get offa my Cloud: Godhand knocks the hero of Final Fantasy VII off the top floor of the airship level. Sephiroth, eat your heart out.

Moves List

(NOTE: Since there are several different controller setups and you can configure your own, we won't refer to specific buttons but instead H=High attack, L=Low Attack, G=Guard, S=Special Attack.)

EXPANDED CONTROLS:
Roll: twice in any direction while guarding
Strong Upper Attack: G+H
Strong Lower Attack: L+H
Triangle Jump: H while running toward a wall
Blade Catch: G as opponent attacks with sword
Body Press: H+L when standing on a level above opponent

GETTING UP AFTER BEING KNOCKED DOWN:
Get Straight Up: G
Roll: D-pad
Jump Rise: G+S
Rise With Mid Attack: H
Rise With Low Attack: L
Rotational Kick: H+L (opponent is near character's legs)
Head Spring: H+L (opponent is near character's head)

Godhand

REAL NAME: Ken Mishima
AGE: 26
NATIONALITY: Japanese
OCCUPATION: Ex-mercenary; president of Mishima Construction Co.

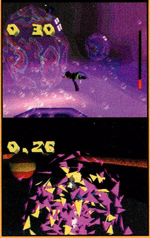
SPECIAL MOVES:
One-Two-Three Kick: H, H, H
Rising Uppercut: H+L
Arm Gun: S
Triple Arm Gun: Hold down S
Grenade Toss: S while jumping
Mach Punch: H, L, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H, H
Shoulder Tackle: H+L while running

Gex 3: Deep Cover Gecko

Players	1	**Developer**	Crystal Dynamics
Availability	Now	**Publisher**	Eidos
Analog Compatible	Yes	**Genre**	Action

✕	**Jump**
○	**Tongue Lash**
□	**Tail Whip**
△	**First-Person View**
L1	**Rotate Camera Left**
L2	**Random Gesture**
R1	**Rotate Camera Right**
R2	**Duck**

Minigame Madness:



Look for the spinning magnifying glasses and tail whip them to shrink down for mini (literally) game fun.

BUBBLE BUSTER: Break five bubbles while avoiding the nasty fishies. Make sure you have enough air when you hit the last one—it continues to run out while the camera pans to show you your prize.

POOL HUSTLER: Atop the pool table on the second floor, eight pool balls stand between you and another coin (and don't fall into any pockets, either!).

FLEA FLICKER: Nail all 10 fleas off the bear's head and grab the coin before time runs out. Look for three on his nose, three on top of his head, and two by either ear.

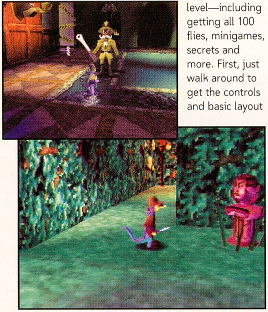
What is it?

The latest in the Gex series of action/platformers. For the third installment, Gex once again travels through a series of TV classics and clichés, all to save his sidekick Miss Adventures from the evil Rez. The demo level is "Clueless in Seattle," with Gex taking on the persona of Sherlock Holmes.

What to expect in the full game:

More than 25 different costumes for Gex (only two are in this demo), more minigames, *Baywatch* babe Marliece Andrada helping you out, vehicles and other things you control like tanks and crocodiles, and over 1,000 of Gex's trademark wisecracks.

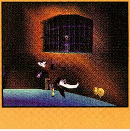
Our advice:



Gex isn't one of those games you just tear through once and never go back to. There's a lot to be done in any one level—including getting all 100 flies, minigames, secrets and more. First, just walk around to get the controls and basic layout of the level; then go back and pick an objective and try to complete it. After you do everything you can on your own, there are a few hidden rooms and secrets (see sidebar) that you should make sure you don't miss.

Dracugex

To become Dracugex, knock over the statue in the hedge maze and a secret room will open back in the main section of the house (see map). Flip the switch here and you are transformed into Dracugex! Now you can glide using your cape (jump and hold the button) and make it to that paw coin in the first room within the five seconds. (OK, it's possible without being Dracugex, but it's much harder.)



Did you try: Hitting everything—and we mean everything—with your tail? Anything you see that stands out (TVs, paintings, etc.), smack it. You may just uncover a secret.

What the hell is the English hunter saying?

"Hold still."

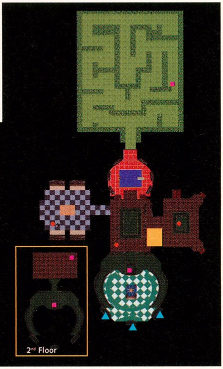
OPM psychic sez:

"See the review on page 79 and you tell me!"

Get a Clue

Use this map to find all the secrets and minigames on this level. The one part that will probably give you the most trouble is the hedge maze—just get in, find the statue there, and get out. Remember to hit the statue heads to open new locations and the secret room, and use Dracugex's gliding power to get all three of the blood tanks.

LEGEND:
▲ = **Blood Tank**
● = **Minigame**
■ = **Statue Head**
🟧 = **Secret Room**



Demo Disc

If a picture is worth a thousand words, a playable demo is worth a million

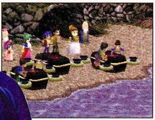
Legend of Legaia

Players	1	**Developer**	Contrail
Availability	Now	**Publisher**	SCEA
Analog Compatible	Yes	**Genre**	RPG

✕	**Action**
○	**Cancel**
□	**Not Used**
△	**Menu**
L1	**Map (when outside)**
L2	**Cancel**
R1	**Dash (w/direction)**
R2	**Not used**

What is it?

A small taste of Sony's giant new RPG from the same people who brought you Wild Arms. The story begins in the small village of Rim Elm, as a young hunter named Vahn is preparing to embark on his first trip outside the village walls.



What to expect in the final version:

Enough towns, dungeons and countryside to fill a huge (roughly 60-hour long) quest, lots of great minigames (dancing, slot machines, fishing), 20 special Hyper Arts attacks per character, awesome spells and more.

Our advice:

The Legaia demo is pretty straightforward, but here's a tiny walk-through for our less patient readers. **1)** Talk to and train with Tetsu on the beach. **2)** Go home and meet Mei, then leave your house. **3)** After the cinema, head back home and talk to Val to sleep. **4)** Another cinema and your first real combat. Now head to the Genesis Tree in the center of town. **5)** Wander around to fight enemies. (You can also open the chest in the cave now for the Wind Book and check out the lady at the shop above your house for some weapons.) **6)** When you've had enough fighting, return home and talk to Val again for a nice closing cinema and the end of the demo.

Vahn
41
Spin Combo
5
TOTAL
Tetsu

By the way, if you needed a walk-through just for this tiny section of Legaia, you're definitely going to need our full walk-through in this issue for the real game...you wuss.

OPM psychic sez:

"Graphics are a little rough and combat takes too much time, but a solid, quality RPG that fans shouldn't miss"

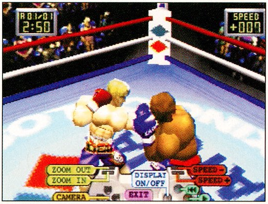
Contender

Players	1	**Developer**	JVC
Availability	Now	**Publisher**	SCEA
Analog Compatible	Yes	**Genre**	Sports

✕	**Lower Level Punch**
○	**Upper Level Punch**
□	**Guard Lower Level**
△	**Guard Upper Level**
L1	**Clockwise Sway**
L2	**Counterclockwise Sway**
R1	**Special Punch**
R2	**Special Punch**

What is it?

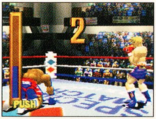
Sony's entry to the (finally) emerging PlayStation boxing genre. The demo is one-player only and just one round long, but you can choose between two different fighters.



What to expect in the final:

Well, a two-player mode and 12-round fights, obviously. But also the chance to build your own boxer to fight against friends, and special punches you learn as the game goes on.

Our advice: First of all, pick Lester if you want to win. He's faster than Marvin, but they're exactly the same in all other attributes. Then if you play the demo enough that you want a bigger challenge, switch to Marvin.



Get up and fight!
Tap your buttons frantically to get up before the count reaches 10.

Did you try:

Checking out all the cool replay modes? You can slow the fight down (even make it go backward), speed it up, freeze frame and more—all from any camera angle you like. Also don't miss all four of each fighter's lame taunts (hold Select and hit any button).

Tale of the Tape

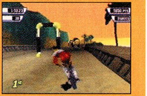
	LESTER YOUNG	vs.	MARVIN WOODS
height:	5’11		5’11
weight:	190lbs.		249lbs.
record:	7-2		18-5
nickname:	“the animal”		“the tank”
old nickname:	“juicy-fruit”		“the log“
best attribute:	fast		mean
nipples?	yes		no

Demo Disc

If a picture is worth a thousand words, a playable demo is worth a million

3Xtreme

Players	1-2	Developer	989 Studios
Availability	April	Publisher	989 Studios
Analog Controller	No	Genre	Racing



What is it? A hell of a lot better looking than 2Xtreme, for one thing. The new all-polys-all-the-time engine brings this extreme gaming festival out of the Stone Age graphically. But then, having read the preview on page 44, you knew that already, didn't you?

Why is the title spelled all funny? Because extreme gamers break the rules, including the rules of spelling.

***OPM* video critic sez:** "While I'm not a big fan of the extreme games (not enough Surge, snowboarding off buildings or cliff diving, I guess), the movie is all gameplay. Scenes with biking, skating and 'blading give you an idea of the game's variety and what the courses are like. Thumbs up."

Centipede

Players	1-2	Developer	Leaping Lizard
Availability	April	Publisher	Hasbro Int.
Analog Controller	Yes	Genre	Action

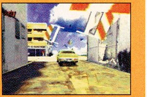
What is it? Yet another 3D update of a classic arcade game. This one comes with a free-roaming 3D shooter interpretation as well as a polygonal presentation of the original.

Why you should care: Well, about a gazillion of you picked up Frogger when it was first released, so the market for updated nostalgia is a thriving one. Why, we're not quite sure.

***OPM* video critic sez:** "I still have my doubts about the game itself (the Frogger remake may still be selling well, but the game is a disaster as far as I'm concerned), but the movie here is solid. Some FMV starts things off and a lot of in-game footage shows you what the game will be like, both the classic mode and the new stuff. Thumbs up."

Driver

Players	1	Developer	Reflections
Availability	July	Publisher	GT Interactive
Analog Controller	Yes	Genre	Action



What is it? Full-throttle cops-and-robbers car-chase action. Check out the preview on page 42 for more info.

Why it's not Grand Theft Auto: This one comes with extremely limited violence (severe car damage is the worst of it) and a slightly (in our opinion, *very* slightly) less sinister theme: You're actually an undercover cop, only *posing* as an evil gangster in order to bring down a crime ring. Seems a little thin, guys, but it just might work.

***OPM* video critic sez:** "Man, does this game look sweet. The movie loses points for showing only replays, but the real game engine actually looks identical. Great car-chase action. All that's missing is some wah-wah guitar funk. Thumbs up."

G Police 2

Players	1	Developer	Psygnosis
Availability	May	Publisher	Psygnosis
Analog Controller	Yes	Genre	Action

What is it? The sequel to Psygnosis' excellent but oft-overlooked sci-fi action flight sim.

Why you should care: The original G-Police was a nicely atmospheric game with a great flight engine and a well-developed story; this looks to be every bit as good. Expect lots of nicely rendered cinemas, as well.

***OPM* video critic sez:** "The movie is a bit blurry and dark, but there's a lot of action going on and you get a good idea of what the game itself will be like. Big explosions (always a plus), lasers a-flying, and all sorts of futuristic sci-fi vehicles fighting it out in an immense futuristic city. How could you go wrong? Thumbs up."

Gauntlet Legends

Players	1-2	Developer	Blam!
Availability	Q2 '99	Publisher	Midway
Analog Controller	Yes	Genre	Action

What is it? Yet another 3D update of a classic arcade game. Legends adds to the Gauntlet formula huge, complex levels, a character level-up system and lots of power-ups.

Better than Gauntlet? Well, we've played the arcade version of Legends, and as far as we can tell, it depends on whether you were a fan of the original. Part of the attraction of the original Gauntlet was its simplicity; fans of the classic might just be put off by Legends' complexity.

***OPM* video critic sez:** "As much fun as it is to see the demon play patty-cake with some wizard's body, what the hell does it have to do with the game? I've played the arcade version quite a bit and I still have no idea. Without game footage the FMV doesn't give you any idea of what Legends is about. Color me unimpressed. Thumbs down."

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Next Month

A look ahead at our next issue

June 1999

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0-0
OUT 2
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ERA 3.40 K 1 W 0
FAST
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AVG .299 TODAY 0-0
HIT AVG
COOL
GOOD
BAD
AWFUL

UmJammer Lammy!

Next issue check out our review of the latest retro-game, Centipede, in addition to Rampage Universal Tour, Baseball 2000, MLB 2000, Big Bass with Blue Marlin and Monaco Grand Prix.

We'll also have previews of Xena Warrior Princess, Jet Moto 3 and the sequel to PaRappa the Rapper, UmJammer Lammy!

Plus, we'll get you through Gex 3: Deep Cover Gecko with our complete walk-through.

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Check Out Our Next Demo Disc!

PLAYABLES

Bust-A-Move 4, R4: Ridge Racer Type 4, NFL Blitz, Abe's Exoddus, Elmo's Letter Adventure

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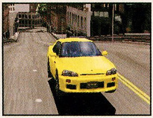
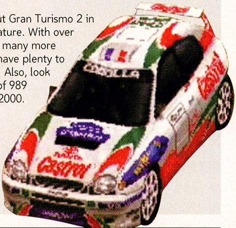


We'll blow out Gran Turismo 2 in a 10-page feature. With over 400 cars and many more tracks, we'll have plenty to talk to about. Also, look for a review of 989 Sports' MLB 2000.

GRAN TURISMO 2™



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Expert Gamer's June issue will be chock full of strategies on some of the best sequels released this spring. It's been a while since we saw the limbless hero of Rayman. However, he's back in Rayman 2: The Great Escape, and *XG* will provide a lot of tips on this frantic-paced game. Also in the issue will be the much-anticipated Soul Reaver guide with detailed maps and a level-by-level walk-through. And Quake fans shouldn't miss the guide on the title's sequel, which will help them enjoy the full experience of this awesome game.

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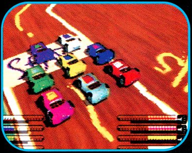
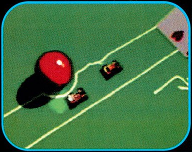
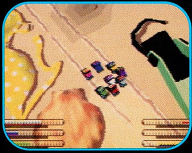


Get your elbows off the table, pal. And put your wheels on. Welcome to the first of eight gigantic worlds.



Pick one of 32 vehicles and put it in gear. Who knows? You might catch a whole inch of air!



Kick up some sand as you race against up to eight players and over a bikini or two.

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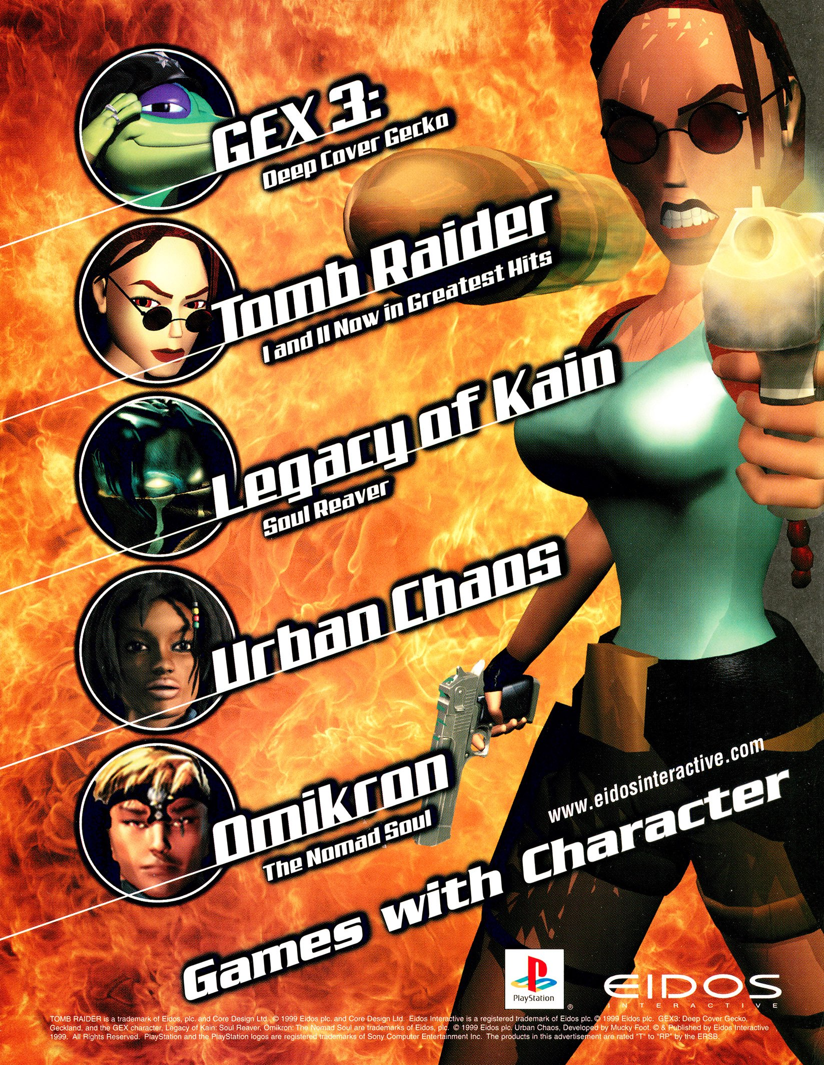
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